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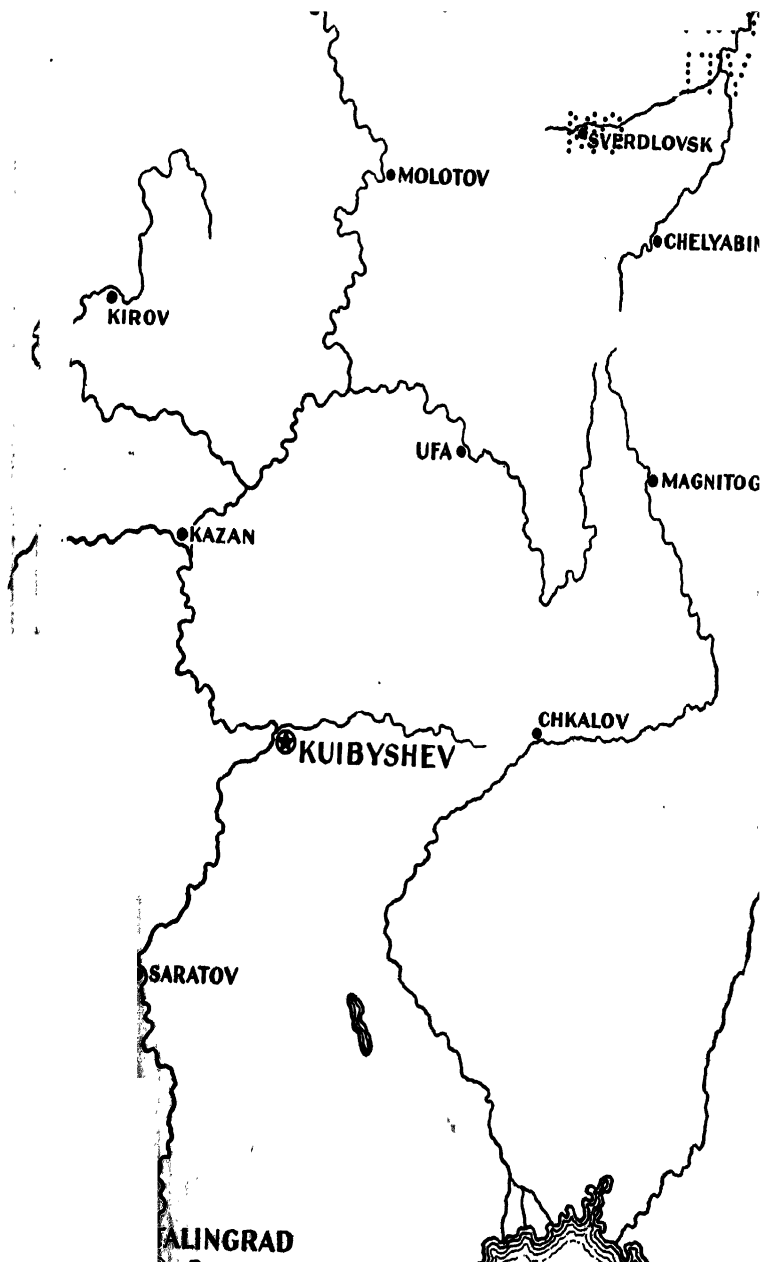


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# MOSCOW DATELINE

*1941—1943*

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BY  
HENRY C.  
CASSIDY



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY • BOSTON

*The Riverside Press Cambridge*



*To my wife*  
*Martha*





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# THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP

as of February, 1943



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## JOSEPH STALIN

SUPREME COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, MARSHAL OF THE SOVIET UNION, CHAIRMAN OF THE STATE DEFENSE COMMITTEE, CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS, COMMISSAR OF DEFENSE, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

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## POLITBURO



(Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.)

## VIACHESLAV MOLOTOV

*Foreign Commissar, Vice-Chairman of the State Defense Committee.*

## KLEMENTY VOROSHILOV

*Former Commissar of Defense, Chairman of the Defense Council of Commissars.*

## MIKHAIL KALININ

*Chairman of the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet, or Parliament.*

## LAZAR KAGANOVICH

*Commissar of Railways, member of the Military Soviet of the Caucasus.*

## THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP

ANASTAS MIKOYAN

*Commissar of Foreign Trade, in charge of transport and supplies for the Red Army.*

NIKITA KRUSHCHEV

*Secretary of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, member of the Southwestern Military Soviet.*

ANDREI ZHDANOV

*Secretary of the Leningrad District Committee of the Communist Party, member of the Leningrad Military Soviet.*

A. A. ANDREYEV

*President of the Council of the Union of the Supreme Soviet, specialist in agriculture.*

## CANDIDATES, OR ALTERNATE MEMBERS OF THE POLITBURO



J. M. SHVERNIK

*President of the Council of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet, leader of trade unions.*

LAURENTY BERIA

*Commissar of Internal Affairs, Head of the NKVD.*

GEORGY MALENKOV

*Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in charge of party administration.*

ALEXANDER SHCHERBAKOV

*Secretary of the Moscow District Committee of the Communist Party, Chief of the Soviet Information Bureau, Chief of the Political Department of the Red Army.*

## THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP

NIKOLAI VOZNESENSKY

*Chairman of the State Planning Commission in charge of defense industries.*

STAVKA



(General Headquarters of the Supreme Command of the Red Army.)

GEORGY ZHUKOV

*Marshal, First Vice-Commissar of Defense, former Commander of the Western Front, Representative of the Stavka on the Stalingrad and Leningrad Fronts.*

KLEMENTY VOROSHILOV

*Marshal, former Commander of the Northwestern Front, Representative on the Leningrad Front.*

ALEXANDER VASILEVSKY

*Marshal, Chief of the General Staff, Representative on the Stalingrad and Voronezh Fronts.*

NIKOLAI VORONOV

*Marshal of Artillery, Representative on the Stalingrad Front.*

BORIS SHAPOSHNIKOV

*Marshal, former Chief of Staff, relieved temporarily because of illness.*

SEMION BUDENNY

*Marshal, former Commander of the Southwestern Front, in charge of formation of reserves.*

ALEXANDER NOVIKOV

*General of Aviation, Air Representative on the Stalingrad Front.*

THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP  
FRONT COMMANDERS



LEONID GOVOROV

*Captor of Mojhaisk, Leningrad Front.*

KIRIL MERETSKOV

*Former Chief of the General Staff, Volkhov Front.*

SEMION TIMOSHENKO

*Former Commander of Western and Southwestern Fronts,  
Northwestern Front.*

IVAN KONEV

*Former Commander of Kalinin Front, Western Front.*

MAX REUTER

*Formerly of the General Staff, Briansk Front.*

NIKOLAI VATUTIN

*Captor of Voroshilovgrad, Southwestern Front.*

FILIP GOLIKOV

*Captor of Kharkov, Voronezh Front.*

KONSTANTIN ROKOSSOVSKY

*Victor of Stalingrad, Don Front.*

ANDREI YEREMENKO

*Former Commander of Stalingrad Front, Southern Front.*

IVAN TIULENEV

*Former Commander of Moscow Military District, Trans-  
Caucasian Front.*



M O S C O W

D A T E L I N E





## The Last Winter of Peace

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**S**PRING came late to Moscow in 1941. Well into April, the heavy winter clouds that fell lower and lower, until every breath of the damp, compressed air rasped like a file in the lungs, hung over the Byzantine turrets of the Kremlin. Not until June 6 did the last snow fall. Those who had to stay with it cursed the dirty coat of ice, the soggy piles of snow that clung to the cobblestoned streets, and longed for the warmth of spring, not knowing that with it would come war.

Everyone, except those who should know, realized that the two greatest powers of continental Europe, Russia and Germany, were about to come to grips. For two cents, you could read in all the newspapers of America reports from Ankara, Berne, and London that Germany was to attack the Soviet Union. For nothing, you could hear in the chancelleries of Europe reports from Rumanian military attachés, Hungarian



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secretaries of embassy, and Finnish counselors of legation that conflict was coming to the eastern front.

But, in the censor-tight cylinder of Moscow, no one knew, not the foreigners, not the Russian people, not the Soviet leaders. The reason we did not know there would be war was that we did know the Soviet Union wanted peace at almost any price, would make almost any concession, even unasked, to escape war. What we could not know was that Germany was determined, in any case, to attack.

So we went on, cursing the tardiness of spring, and leading the strange life of that last winter of peace in Moscow.

The Kremlin carried out all its customary rites. The Communist Party opened its eighteenth all-union conference February 15, and heard reports by Georgi Malenkov, secretary of the party central committee, and Nikolai Voznesensky, chairman of the state planning commission on transport and industry. The central committee of the party met in plenary session February 20, and dropped Maxim Litvinov from committee membership, with others, for 'failure to fulfill their duties.' The Supreme Soviet held its eighth session February 25, and adopted a 1941 budget of 215,400,000,000 rubles, up from 179,000,000,000 in 1940, with about one third of the appropriations, or 70,900,000,000 rubles, allotted to national defense. Boxes of chocolates, bottles of fruit-juice, and piles of fruit were heaped up on the buffet tables of the Great Palace. The delegates from all the sixteen republics filed through the flood-lit entry of Troitsky Gate,

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showed their passes to successive lines of sentries, left their overshoes, fur-collared coats, and fur hats at the ground-floor cloakrooms, and went upstairs in electric elevators. In the white-walled council chamber they listened through earphones to speeches in the many languages of the Soviet Union about 'Anglo-French warmongers,' and the 'second imperialistic world war.' Then they filed out to stand around the buffet tables or stroll in the high-ceilinged, red-carpeted corridors.

Joseph Stalin sat in his habitual place, far back and to the right of the rostrum. With him, on that side reserved for Communist Party leaders, were Andrei Zhdanov, party secretary for Leningrad, Nikita Khrushchev, secretary for the Ukraine, and other party leaders. Stalin, looking from the distant press box like a tiny, animated doll, fashioned like his stubby figure and wearing his Asiatic mask, joked and laughed with his colleagues during the long speeches, rose to applaud with the others when his own name was mentioned, and then sat down again to return to his banter.

The people outside the Kremlin formed their eternal queues. They stood in line for bread, milk, and meat; they waited at kiosks for the evening newspaper, *Vechernaya Moskva*, to see if there were any advertisements of sales; they stood for movie tickets to 'Musical Story,' a Soviet version of the American Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers films; they waited for bus or streetcar tickets to go home. Then they made their tea or poured their vodka, and sat around their

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tables, talking sometimes of the war abroad, but more often of rubles and food and drink at home.

The foreigners made their own little rounds. The week really began only on Tuesdays, the 'mardis de Mme. Gafencu.' M. Gafencu, tall, elegant, gray-haired former foreign minister of Rumania, and his wife, blonde, aging but still agile former French actress, received at 6 P.M. that day at their legation, a little, pink-marble-walled palace on the Leningrad chaussée. All the Axis and neutrals came.

There were tea and chatter in the salon, cocktails and ping-pong in the hall. Later, the doors of the dining room opened and there was buffet supper. Then the phonograph was turned on and there was dancing. M. Gafencu, his handsomeness now scarred by lines of worry, would take his guests aside one by one to talk over the last week's events. He was proprietor of one of Rumania's great newspapers, and liked to talk news, especially with the correspondents. Mme. Gafencu would blockade the guests one by one on a corner divan and talk volubly of her views on a multitude of subjects. She was eloquent on the topic of reporting. 'If you want to be a great correspondent,' she would say, 'you must pay attention to two things: café gossip and the wives of diplomats. . . .'

This went on until four or five o'clock in the morning, and those who left first risked the displeasure of their hosts, and perhaps the loss of an invitation to the next 'mardi de Mme. Gafencu.'

Cards fluttered all over the diplomatic corps with invitations for the rest of the week. A stiff board,

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bearing a gold eagle and the inscription, 'The American Ambassador and Mrs. Steinhardt request the honor of the company of...' usually for Saturday night. There would be dinner, an American movie, dancing and bridge. A gray piece of notepaper, with 'British Embassy' engraved at the top, and the signature of Isabel Cripps at the bottom, saying, 'We shall be so pleased if you will dine with us on...' for a weekday night. There would be a white-tie dinner and dancing. A card, with the calling-card of Augusto e Frances Rosso attached, and a typewritten message, 'beg to remind that they expect you to come and have supper...' There would be dinner and ping-pong and dancing at the richly handsome Italian embassy.

Between dinners, there were cocktail parties for visitors, and luncheons by junior members of the corps. Weekends, the 'fun gang' would escape to the American dacha, a tiny jewel of a country house, set on a ridge at Nemchinovka, off the Mojhaïsk chausée, later to be a battlefield. From the outside, it was a rickety-looking shack, with Toonerville Trolley chimneys and a sagging roof. But the large main room had a big fireplace that shed warmth, light, and cheerfulness over the rustic furniture. In the rear a circular garden, built around a fountain, looked out over a pleasant green valley. Around the fireplace or the garden would gather the hosts, Charles Dickerson, first secretary of the embassy, and his wife, Constance; Ivan Yeaton, then major and military attaché, and his wife, Alice; and Charles Thayer, third secretary of the embassy, all co-proprietors of the dacha.

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There would be the Italian ambassador, Rosso, and his wife, or the Greek minister, Diamantopoulos, and his wife. These were the two most popular chiefs of mission that winter in Moscow. Their wives were both Americans. They were close friends until the Italo-Greek war separated them. With one or the other couple, thereafter, might be the Belgian minister, Hendrykcx, and his wife, or Colonel Eric Greer and John Russell, military attaché and third secretary of the British embassy, or Colonel Charles Luguët, air attaché of the French embassy, and his wife, and one or two Americans.

Except at the dacha, the conversation was eternally politics. Every important phrase of the *Pravda*, every gesture of a member of the Soviet government, was twisted and turned and tortured with analysis and interpretation. Now, it seems as though every act of that last winter in Moscow followed a fatal path. But then, it was not so evident. And there was much to examine.

Early in the winter, the Axis was riding high. Germany signed with the Soviet Union a new trade treaty, calling among other items for the greatest amount of wheat ever conceded by one country to another, and Viacheslav Molotov, foreign minister and then prime minister, went off in a blaze of ceremony to visit Adolf Hitler. I was sitting in the dark movie hall of Ambassador Steinhardt's residence, Spaso House, when my secretary telephoned to say the visit had just been announced by the Moscow radio. I whispered the news to Steinhardt, Cripps, and Gafencu, and they

## THE LAST WINTER OF PEACE

slipped out to pace back and forth under the crystal chandelier in the salon, arguing the meaning of the trip. The dancing was cut short that night, and most of the guests hurried home to telegraph their governments that Russia probably was about to join the tri-power pact of Germany, Italy, and Japan. But Molotov returned with his pen dry.

This period reached its climax on Easter Sunday when Russia signed its neutrality pact with Japan, and Stalin came to the railroad station to see off Yosuke Matsuoka, then Japanese foreign minister. That was probably the weirdest public performance ever indulged in by the chief of a great state.

Matsuoka had come twice to Moscow. The first time was on his way to Berlin and Rome. The correspondents had a talk with him soon after his first arrival, and he seemed to be just a pleasant little man with spiked hair, a black pipe, and a great gift of gab. Jean Champenois, then of Havas, described him best as 'an English country gentleman painted yellow.' He told us he hoped to stay longer on the return visit, after going to see Hitler and Mussolini, and it was obvious that his highly publicized visit to Berlin and Rome was only a screen for more serious talks with the Russians. He came back, planning to stay seven days, remained on for ten, and started to leave, apparently empty-handed, when he was called to the Kremlin that Easter Sunday morning, and the neutrality pact was signed.

He was due to leave that afternoon at 4.50 P.M. on the trans-Siberian express. I was at the station to

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cover the departure, but when train-time came, Matsuoka had not yet arrived. The train was held, and Axis members of the diplomatic corps who had come to see him off wandered aimlessly about the platform until Matsuoka drove up at the head of a caravan of cars, flying the Japanese flag, and emerged with an exuberant escort of Japanese embassy officials. They stood, shaking hands and embracing, outside his car. It was 5.50 P.M. It looked as though the train were about to leave. I turned to leave the group and run down the platform to telephone the departure. Taking the first stride, I nearly fell over two little men, walking unescorted up the platform. They were Stalin and Molotov!

Every time I have seen Stalin, my chief impression has been that the man does not look real. He has been portrayed and cartooned so often, and resembles so closely all the pictures and caricatures and busts of himself, that he always seems to be an animated figure from a printed page. That day, with his narrow eyes squinting and his sallow face pale in the sunlight, he appeared even more unreal. His uniform, too, of khaki képi and greatcoat, over black boots, but with no insignia whatsoever, looked like a doll's dress. He walked stiffly, his arms straight, unbending at his sides. Molotov looked like another animated cartoon of himself, with his oversize moon face set between a gray European felt hat and topcoat.

They approached the group awkwardly, obviously not practiced as were the diplomats in the art of ceremonial leave-taking on a railroad platform. Then

## THE LAST WINTER OF PEACE

they picked out Matsuoka, and Stalin approached him and hugged him several times without speaking. But Stalin had another mission that day.

He walked around the tight little circle, shaking hands on all sides, and then looked up, as though seeking someone. He selected a German officer, Colonel Hans Krebs, one of the many standing stiffly at attention in their long gray coats, and approached him. Stalin peered up sharply at the officer's face, and asked twice: 'German? German?'

'Yes, sir,' the officer said, saluting.

Stalin shook his hand, and said: 'We shall be friends.'

Bewildered, Colonel Krebs, who was then German acting military attaché, stared down at Stalin, saluted again as the Soviet leader continued the rounds, and followed him with puzzled eyes. Stalin's phrase, 'We shall be friends,' was overheard by many who understood Russian well. It was whispered quickly from ear to ear. It stirred immediately a flood of speculation: Did he mean it as an expression of personal friendship for Krebs? Or was it a proclamation of Soviet-German friendship? Was it a calculated gesture? Or was it done on the spur of the moment? Most of those present thought it was planned in advance, applied not to personalities, but to states.

That was the high point of Soviet-German friendship and of Matsuoka's departure. Stalin led the way into Matsuoka's car, exchanged a few more words with him there, and slipped away on the empty platform on the far side of the train.



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The Germans had watched Stalin with glittering eyes that afternoon, as though they were fascinated, and with good reason. For exactly one week before, on Sunday, April 6, Stalin had concluded a pact of friendship with Yugoslavia, on the very day that Germany invaded that country. As it later developed, that pact was instrumental in convincing Hitler that the Soviet Union intended to invade Germany and western Europe, and that he must himself invade Russia first, before turning anew against England. Those who knew the inside story of that pact, however, realized that such was not the case: that it was a very timid gesture indeed.

In the beginning, the Russians proposed a pact of friendship and *neutrality*. It would have been strange, had they intended to enforce the pact with armed action, to insist as they did on a clause of neutrality. The Yugoslavs, however, held out for a pact of friendship, without mention of neutrality. During the night of April 5, the Yugoslav minister, Milan Gavrilovich, talked repeatedly by telephone to Belgrade, in the hours just before that capital was blasted by German bombs, obtaining authorization to sign the final text from which the Russians agreed to drop the neutrality clause. The Germans actually intercepted these conversations at Budapest, and published some of them — but conveniently left out all mention of the Russian desire for neutrality.

Then the Russians insisted that the pact be dated April 5, the day before the German attack on Yugoslavia, although Gavrilovich and his staff did not go

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to the Kremlin until 1.30 A.M., April 6, and stayed there until 7 A.M., when German planes were already over Belgrade and German troops were marching into Yugoslavia. The seemingly unimportant difference in dates was very important in that it left the Russians a loophole to slip away from any German charges that they had signed with an actual enemy of the Reich. On the day the pact was dated, Yugoslavia and Germany still maintained diplomatic relations.

The little Yugoslav legation was one of Moscow's most interesting missions that winter, and the focal point of this new period in which Russia seemed to be moving out of the German camp. There befell this legation many strange adventures. The minister, a saint if ever there was one in politics, unselfish and loyal, with a hard face, lined as though it had been carved from granite, and uncommunicative to an extreme, played an important part in the last days of his country at home. When the Yugoslav government proposed to make a deal with Germany late in March, he promptly telegraphed his resignation as minister. Then, as president of the Serbian Peasant Party, he engineered the resignation of three members of the cabinet who belonged to his party. That split led to the coup d'état which eventually kept Yugoslavia faithful to the Allies, until she was forced to bow under German arms.

The Soviets liked Gavrilovich. He had been in Moscow only one year, the first Yugoslav minister to come after diplomatic relations were established, but he was a Slav and the Russians' kind of man. The

## MOSCOW DATELINE

night the friendship pact was signed, Stalin stayed with him in the Kremlin until well after dawn, questioning him closely on Yugoslavia, even to the point of wanting to know whether the Yugoslavs crossed themselves from left to right, in the Catholic fashion, or from right to left, in the Orthodox manner. And the photograph of the ceremony of signature, published in all the official Soviet press, depicted Stalin beaming benignly on Gavrilovich, as he has rarely smiled on any man.

But this period of apparent Soviet independence of Germany was shortlived. The Russians had miscalculated the strength of the Balkans and had expected the erection there of a front against Germany. When it failed to materialize, they crawled quickly back into their shell. Here, again, it was the Yugoslav legation which played the leading rôle.

Soon after the signing of the Soviet-Yugoslav pact, the German ambassador, Graf Friedrich Werner von der Schulenburg, went to Berlin for consultation. He returned to Moscow in time for the May Day parade, Soviet Russia's last Red Square spectacle before the war. It was a brilliant display, carried out in a blaze of sunlight, under a clear, light-blue sky. All Moscow was arrayed in red flags, flowing banners, revolutionary slogans, photographs of the Politburo. Loudspeakers brayed band music and dance tunes in every square. As the bells of Spasski Tower chimed noon, Marshal Semeon Timoshenko rode into Red Square on a giant chestnut. The Red army filed by, showing a particularly impressive collection of new motorized

## THE LAST WINTER OF PEACE

and mechanized equipment. Then the civilians, in their turn, trotted past the Politburo, assembled at the top of Lenin's tomb. But Graf von der Schulenburg had brought news which was to darken the horizon.

On the night of May 8, Andrei Vyshinsky, the man who prosecuted the 1938 purge trials and who was now first vice-commissar for foreign affairs, called Gavrilovich to the Narkomindiel, or foreign commissariat. He almost wept, he hated to say it, but the Soviet government must sever diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, the state with which it had signed one month before a pact of friendship. Every consideration would be shown the Yugoslav diplomats, he said, and they could remain in Russia in a private capacity, if they so desired, but formal relations must be broken. Tight-lipped, Gavrilovich left the Narkomindiel, and that night he spoke to no one.

The next morning, Ivar Lunde, secretary of the Norwegian legation, opened an envelope of the kind that usually brought ordinary bills for rent from Burobin, the office for services to foreigners, and found in it a brief note, saying that the Soviet government, in view of the fact that Norway no longer existed as a sovereign state, was ceasing relations. I learned of it from Lunde, and called both the Belgian and Yugoslav legations, since they were in the same position, to see if they had received similar notes. The Belgian minister said he had not, and then telephoned back a few minutes later to say, yes, he had just found his note on his desk. The Yugoslav secre-

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tary, Miletitch, knew nothing about it. But a few hours later Gavrilovich called in his staff, and said, 'Gentlemen, we are leaving Moscow.' It was interesting to note both that Russia showed Yugoslavia the tender attention of not severing relations by note, but only verbally, in contrast to Norway and Belgium; and also that Gavrilovich made no protest over the action. His point of view, which was supported by future facts, was that, as long as Russia could remain out of the war, even if it meant a temporary setback to his own country, and as long as Russia could continue to grow strong, all was well for the Allies.

Another interesting point was that this action was taken without prompting by Germany. When I called the German and Italian embassies to obtain their reaction, assuming that they were aware of the development, and indeed had brought it about, neither of them knew about it, were astonished to hear of it. It was voluntary appeasement.

Gavrilovich and his staff left by train the morning of June 3 for Ankara. The Belgian legation left that afternoon by trans-Siberian express for the United States. And when the Greek minister, Diamantopoulos, returned to his legation from seeing off the Belgians, he, too, found a little note, for German occupation of his country was now complete.

'You know what this means,' the Greek minister told me; 'peace in the east.' And Moscow's diplomatic corps was convinced that the Soviet course was set firmly once more in the path of appeasement. A project as gigantic as invasion of Russia cannot be kept

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secret, and the German troop movements alone were enough to show what was coming, but while rumors flew elsewhere all over the world of the coming battle, the Russians would not believe it, and the diplomats could not believe it.

Stalin, in this period, took over from Molotov the post of chairman of the council of people's commissars, or prime minister, and it was clear that only very exceptional circumstances could have brought this about. The Soviet system had always been a dual one of joint control, in principle, by the Soviet government and the Communist Party. In effect, of course, the party had been dominant. But decrees, proclamations, and salutations had been signed by Molotov, as chief of the government, and Stalin, as secretary-general of the party. Now the pyramid of dictatorship was complete, and Stalin assumed openly the full responsibility. What was the emergency which finally brought him out of the obscurity of the party chambers to the open council room of the government? The consensus of diplomats was that this was not a 'cabinet de guerre,' but a cabinet of 'pacte à quatre,' meaning with Germany, Italy, and Japan.

The attitude of the Russians themselves to the Soviet-German crisis was reflected in a story then making the rounds of a conversation between Stalin and Hitler. Stalin: 'What are all your troops doing on the Soviet border?' Hitler: 'They're here on vacation. What are all your troops doing here?' Stalin: 'They're here to see that yours stay on vacation.'

That story may not have been very far from the

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truth. For Tass, the Soviet official news agency, issued June 13 a communiqué that was a classic of naïveté and almost a paraphrase of that joke. 'Even before the British ambassador, Sir Stafford Cripps, went abroad,' it said, foreign reports had talked of German political and economic demands on the Soviet Union. These reports were described as 'malicious fabrications,' and the introduction of Sir Stafford's name in the opening phrase implied that, after he had gone abroad, the reports had become even more insistent. That was a direct slap at the man who was to return as the ambassador of an allied power.

Tass said the movements of Soviet and German troops toward their common frontier were not of a 'hostile character.' The Red army, it insisted, was simply bent upon ordinary summer maneuvers. Reports of friction were said to have been 'spread with the intention of provoking Soviet-German hostilities and spreading the war.' This phrase was a throw-back to the days of March, 1939, when Stalin had first prescribed to his party friendship with Germany, warned against the 'Anglo-French warmongers,' and ruled that Russia should not 'pull their chestnuts out of the fire.'

'Both countries intend to observe the provisions of the Soviet-German pact of friendship,' Tass concluded, speaking with a falsely authoritative air of knowledge about the intentions of Germany.

That communiqué was so strange that, soon after the war, it was explained away, to some extent, by Solomon Lozovsky, vice-commissar of foreign affairs,

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in his first press conference as vice-chief and official spokesman of the Soviet Information Bureau. It was all a trick, he said, to sound out the Germans. If they printed the communiqué in the controlled press of their own and subjugated countries, it would mean they did intend to abide by the friendship pact. If they did not print it, it would mean they intended to break the pact. They did not print it, and, therefore, the Soviet government found that Germany was about to become an enemy. Actually, from all surface evidence, the Soviet government drew no such deductions at the time, and as an excuse, even afterward, it sounded very lame indeed. What was true in that communiqué was that Germany had made no political and economic proposals to the Soviet Union. In fact, Germany executed her last delivery to Russia, under their trade treaty, on June 21. And the Soviets continued to wait for the ultimatum that came only after the war had started.

Great Britain and the United States warned the Soviet government of information in their possession, that Germany was preparing to attack, and that very warning brought forth another demonstration of Soviet desire for peace. The British ambassador, Sir Stafford Cripps, asked for an interview with Stalin, to communicate this information to him. It was declined. He asked for an interview with Molotov. It was declined. He finally succeeded in seeing Vyshinsky, and although that interview has never been published, the general impression was that Vyshinsky went as far as to indicate he considered Sir Stafford a 'provocateur,'



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for implying that Germany would turn against her Soviet friends. Sir Stafford left early in June, apparently a beaten man. It was made known that he was going to Stockholm, 'to have his teeth fixed.' Actually, he went to London on business, and he expected never to return to Moscow. It remained for the Germans to make his mission in Russia a success, and to make Great Britain and the Soviet Union allies.

The last official party I went to in Moscow before the war was given by the German embassy at the old Austrian legation, next door to the foreign commissariat's tile-walled guest-house and a few doors down from my office, on Ostrovsky Pereoulouk. It was a movie, showing the horrors of the Blitzkrieg in the Balkans, an old German trick of intimidation. The staff of the Red army's foreign liaison section was there, and seemed little impressed. The American embassy declined the invitation for its diplomatic personnel, but the staff of the military attaché's office was present. So was I, as it was business for me to know and write of what the Germans were up to. The next day I was leaving for the south on vacation.

'Are you really leaving now?' Dmitri Popescu, secretary of the Rumanian legation, asked me, and I should have caught the hint in his tone of mild surprise, the most he could possibly imply to me, but I didn't. 'Yes,' I said. And I left.

## Russia on the Eve

---

THE Russian countryside was an entrancing spectacle on the eve of war, a panorama of the glib, blissful peace that all the European pretenders to neutrality enjoyed while Germany was overpowering their neighbors, only to turn next against them. Not that life in Russia was ever really blissful. The first thing that any visitor remarked, in walking the streets of Moscow, was that the people never smiled. But in those days life was definitely better. The crop was good, so there was enough to eat. The Baltic States, which had been absorbed by the Soviet Union just a year before, were beginning to send in their flow of consumers' goods. And this was an island of peaceful construction, amid the wanton destruction all about of the 'imperialistic war.'

So I saw the Russian people at their happiest under the Soviet régime. I also saw them as they really were. I had always thought they were a primitive

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folk, passionate in their violences as they were dull in their submissions, but I hadn't seen anything until I tangled with them and airplanes. That came about when I flew from Moscow to Sochi, on the Caucasian Riviera stretch of the Black Sea coast.

Intourist said to be at the Moscow airport at 8.30 A.M., June 14, to take the plane at 9.10. Pavel Ivanovich, my chauffeur, got me there on time, and then the struggle began. I had three cases — a suitcase, duffel bag, and typewriter. A lot of people set upon them in the waiting room of the ultra-modern airport building, protesting and arguing and gesticulating. Out of that came a decision that I could take the duffel bag and typewriter with me, but there was no room for the suitcase. That would follow tomorrow. And *zaftra*, in Russian, was like *mañana* in Spain: most any day.

I agreed, but asked if I could switch a few things I would need immediately from the suitcase to the duffel bag. That was all right, too, and the crowd set about doing the job for me. The result of that was that the zipper of the duffel bag was torn out by the roots, and I was left with a gaping canvas container, held together by Pavel's belt.

By then it was time to go. The loudspeaker announced something at 9.10 promptly, and I started through the entrance. But I was wrong. That was the 9.20 plane for Odessa. A few minutes later, they announced the 9.10 plane for Sukhum and Sochi, and I went out to the runway.

I could see there was nothing to fear from the plane, a twin-engined, twenty-one-seater Douglas. It was a

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good ship, like the one that had brought me in from Berlin a year before, and in good shape. The crew, too, inspired confidence: healthy, capable-looking pilot and co-pilot, business-like mechanic, and a bright stewardess. She was particularly remarkable. A young, plump brunette with frank blue eyes and a pug nose, she had lost her left upper teeth, but even so, she was a comparative beauty, and proud of her blue, semi-military uniform. She went about her job in a friendly, competent way. The passengers were my worry.

No sooner had the wheels left the runway in a neat take-off than they let loose. I was in place 10, in the center of the middle row. A young, bovine couple was in front of me. The girl immediately waved for the stewardess, grabbed a paper bag, and threw up enormous quantities. The man did the same. Then they let their seats back to my knees and fell asleep. The dark, hook-nosed, curly-headed young man on my left started talking wildly. Sweat stood out on his forehead. His eyes grew wider and wider. It was his first flight. Somewhere behind us another passenger started heaving. Ahead of us the others chattered across the aisles.

The plane went up to fifteen hundred feet, and made a beeline south. It was rough at that low altitude, and the plane pitched a lot. My neighbor on the left watched the altitude needle until it became stable, then stared at the couple ahead until they grew quiet. Finally satisfied that the plane was going no higher and that he was not going to be sick, he regained confidence and joined the general chatter. Then he sang

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aloud. Finally he declaimed at the top of his lungs. No one paid any attention to him. It was all quite normal.

The stewardess, who was talking to the passengers one by one, came to me, and proclaimed for all to hear that I was something special, sent by Intourist. They all turned on me. She produced a red leather calendar notebook, issued by a Berlin optical firm as an advertisement, and wanted to know if I had one like it. No, I said, I was not German, but American. Yes, she said, I know, I was told. That notebook had been given to her by ten German engineers on the previous flight from Rostov to Moscow. They were evacuated just before the war began!

The passengers started firing questions at me, so I explained that I was an American correspondent, going to Sochi for a vacation. For what paper, they wanted to know. I found some dispatches in *Pravda* from abroad credited to the Associated Press, and told them that was my press association. Were those my dispatches, they wanted to know. No, I explained, I was the Moscow correspondent. There followed all the usual questions about how long I had been in Russia and where I had been before that.

The plane, meanwhile, bounced against a head-wind over Voronezh and proceeded to Rostov-on-Don. That was my neighbor's home town, and as we came over the Don and the muddy Azov Sea, he sang louder and louder, ceasing only to proclaim Rostov's beauties. The plane landed, after a five-hour flight from Moscow.

The stewardess conducted me down a line of three

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planes, all Douglas, to the one that was continuing the trip to Sukhum. There were only four passengers in that big twenty-one-seater, and the plane went up to ten thousand feet for the two-hour run over the Caucasus Mountains. It was smooth up there, and the clouds beneath us looked like a fairy land of cotton fields and whipped-cream castles, inhabited by grotesque snow men and fluffy animals. One of the passengers, a young man who had only a tennis racket for baggage, sat beside me, said something in Russian with a stutter, and then translated it into halting English: 'fantastic forms.' Another called to me, 'Comrade,' and pointed out another cloud formation. The new stewardess, a dark, thin little girl, sweating in a white dress, ran from one passenger to another, pointing out things to be seen.

Then the passenger who had said 'Comrade' cried in Russian, 'the sea, the sea!' They all dashed to his side of the plane, and there was the Black Sea, glistening through the clouds.

The plane swung out around the snow-capped mountains and followed the coastline to Sukhum. There it landed in a smooth field and was signaled smartly into line by a girl, waving red and white flags, in front of the modern white little airport building. Two fighters were practicing the take-off, there was another Douglas on the field, and a collection of small crates at the side.

I had decided to stay at Sukhum to wait for my suitcase and then go the next day to Sochi, but there had already been a telegram to the airport telling them

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to send me on and send the baggage after me. A polite little fellow in blue uniform took me into the airport, sold me a ticket to Sochi, and led me out to the field again.

I didn't see the next plane I was to take until I was beside it. It was an ancient, gray biplane, with a popping motor stuck on its nose, bicycle wheels for an undercarriage, and struts sticking out all over it like nerves — like my own nerves, by then. For a girl came up with a first-aid kit, handed me cotton for my ears, and wrapped a helmet and goggles around my head. They folded up my only felt hat and stuck it in a greasy corner. They stowed my two cases among the controls. It was an open three-seater. The pilot sat in the front cockpit. The other passenger sat behind me. The plane rattled, quivered, jumped across the field, and leaped into the air.

It was one hour to Sochi, they said, just as we were leaving. An hour, I thought, was more than I could take. I wrapped my hands around the two wooden supports of the pilot's seat and held on for dear life. But after I became used to having nothing between me and the earth but a thin layer of wood and a thousand feet of air, it wasn't so bad. We went back along the coastline, swung over Sochi, and landed easily.

An antique Packard coupé awaited me, and took me in state to the Riviera Hotel. I walked up the driveway, where the vacationers looked up curiously at me from their dominoes and checkers, and went to my room.

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It was a gorgeous sight, a large, double bedroom with tall windows open on a broad veranda with wicker chairs and couch, and beyond, past palms and cypress trees, the Black Sea rolled up on the rock coast.

I took a bath, and just after sunset had supper of veal chop, salad, beer, and coffee on the terrace. Outside my window, a loudspeaker was rasping out the same state radio program we heard so often in Moscow. But here it didn't seem so bad. I read Ernest Hemingway's *Men Without Women* for a while, and then fell asleep.

With all the richness of the Caucasus, I had a struggle the next day trying to get a meal. Not that there wasn't anything to eat, but just that I couldn't get it when I wanted it.

I had told them I wanted breakfast in my room at 9 A.M., one piece of fruit, bread, coffee, and nothing more. The director, the reception clerk, the cook, the baggageman, and the maid had all come to see me the night before, to ask what I wanted to eat. I told them all the same thing. They all seemed surprised, but, after all, it seemed quite simple.

So when I woke up at 9 A.M., I rolled out of bed, washed and dressed, thinking breakfast would be along any minute. By 9.30, I was hungry, and there was no breakfast in sight. Luckily I had brought along a couple of apples. I ate them, smoked a cigarette, and sat on the veranda and waited. At 10.30 the maid arrived with a huge tray, which she deposited on the veranda table and started unloading. There was a



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dish of caviar and onions, sliced and chopped, a plate of fried mushrooms and potatoes, a cucumber and radish salad, cheese, butter, cake, and a bottle of white Abrau 'Riesling' wine, a Soviet copy of the Rhine wine.

'That's dinner,' I protested.

'That's breakfast,' said the maid.

'But I ordered fruit, bread, and coffee,' I objected.

'That is coming next,' the maid said, and she departed.

She came back in a few moments with a platter of brown bread, a jug of coffee, a pot of heavy cream, and a bowl of peaches and cherries.

Good as it may sound, I couldn't eat it. I drank one cup of coffee, pushed the food to the back of the table, out of the sun, and went for a walk.

Outside, the loudspeaker was already squawking the state transmission, the alternate voices of men and women announcers, the songs and speeches. I went back from the shore through a deep park, both to get away from the radio and to see the Caucasus. The mountains were there, snow-peaked in the distance, and so was the radio, following me incessantly. I walked down toward the town, past the queues waiting to take the bus or to buy milk or to get into the sports park, and then turned back. There was no trouble finding the route. I just followed the noise of the loudspeaker.

When I returned, the director and the reception clerk and the cook and the baggageman and the maid were all waiting for me. They wanted to know when I would eat again.

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'At two o'clock,' I told them as firmly as I could, 'and just take away the hot plate, leave the rest of this food here. That is my lunch. Just bring the mushrooms and potatoes back hot.'

They seemed puzzled, but satisfied, and went away, one by one.

I sat on the veranda and listened unwillingly to that radio, drowning out the rushing of the sea, and watched the sun swing around, melting that food. When 2 P.M. arrived without the hot plate, I looked for a bell to call the maid. There was none. When 2.30 came, I surrendered, and sat down to eat the caviar, jelly by now, and the cheese, liquid by now, and to drink the hot wine.

I was just starting on the fruit when the maid marched in carrying another huge platter with two steaks, fried potatoes, carrots, and cucumbers.

'It's late and too much,' I tried to object.

'It's not me, it's the chef,' she said peremptorily, 'eat,' and she huffed away, her black skirt and white shirt flying.

I nibbled at the meat and vegetables, and then left them. The radio mercifully desisted, so I took a sun-bath on the veranda, and when it grew too hot, went into the room and took a nap. At 5 P.M., the loud-speaker opened with a blast again, so I climbed off the bed, read for a while, and then the maid came in for my final food battle of the day. When and where would I eat next, she asked.

'In the restaurant,' I said, 'at 7 P.M.'

'There is no restaurant; only a sanatorium.'

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'All right,' I said, 'in the sanatorium, or wherever you like, but only where the others succeed in getting what they want to eat.'

By some miracle, my suitcase arrived at 7 P.M., borne in triumphantly by the baggageman. It looked better than I had after that trip. It wore a big blue baggage label, to match the big plane in which I had started the trip, with 'Aeroflot U.S.S.R.' inscribed on one side, and 'Kaccugu' (my name in Russian) 'Moscow Sukhum' on the other side. There was a plain white label, small, like the plane in which I had finished the trip, saying: 'Kaccugu Ribera Hotel Sochi.'

Then came the maid, who led me through the garden to the next-door sanatorium. There was a big dining room, with high windows opening on three sides to the sea. The tables were bright with flowers and heavy with food. Swarthy men, who looked like gangsters on a vacation, and under-slung women were taking places. The maid led me up a flight of stairs to a little private room, overlooking the restaurant like a theater box. She brought in a bowl of chicken soup, and the meal situation looked more promising. Then there was a suspicious pop, and the maid emerged with a bottle wrapped in a towel.

'What is that?' I asked.

'Champagne,' she said.

In all my four years in France, I had never liked champagne. Even if I had liked it there, I would not have liked Russian champagne.

'I don't want champagne,' I said.

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'Soviet champagne,' the maid said.

'I don't want Soviet champagne,' I said. 'Wine or beer.'

She left the champagne bottle standing in front of me, and went away. In a moment she was back with another bottle, sticky red Crimean Madeira. I didn't like that either.

'That's fine,' I said, with resignation.

The food was good; soup, steak, lettuce salad, cake, and coffee. But those two bottles stood accusingly before me. I hurried through the dinner and left them.

In the courtyard people were drawing up benches in a circle. A shirt-sleeved fellow brought out an accordion, and a few couples danced. The women had difficulties, though, with their wobbly, high-heeled shoes on the rough concrete. A master of ceremonies took charge, and they played a geography game, in which he named a country and the crowd was supposed to shout back the name of a city there. The fun seemed to be in placing Vladivostok in Chile and Riga in Australia, so the master of ceremonies could wise-crack. Then they tried to dance awhile longer.

I noticed a pavilion in the garden, where drinks seemed to be on sale. I went there, and saw stacks of ice and brown bottles.

'Beer?' I asked hopefully.

'No more,' the girl said, and went on sweeping the floor.

I walked back to my room, drank a glass of tepid water out of the inevitable glass jug on the table, and went to bed.

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I had been worried about a little moth hole at a strategic point in my bathing trunks, but I needn't have been, because, on the Russian Riviera, to paraphrase the old ditty about the hula-hula dance, they don't wear trunks when they go to take their dunks.

Later, I remembered having read and heard stories of nude bathing in Russia, but that had been a long time ago, and even if I had recalled them, I should have supposed all that had been changed. A country which had started out to be Communistic, and now preached patriotism and sanctity of the family, could certainly be expected to have put trunks on its swimmers.

So, when I wanted to take my first swim in the Black Sea, I rolled up my trunks in a towel, went down to the desk, and asked to be shown to the beach. The reception clerk led me down the garden steps to the shore, and then along the concrete walk to a green wooden fence on the beach.

'You go in there,' she said.

Inside the fence a young girl was sitting, wrapped in a white robe, and wearing a towel around her head. Behind her stretched about a hundred yards of pebbly beach, entirely enclosed by the fence, with flat benches in the sun, and on the benches an assortment of naked men. At the back of the beach was another collection of benches, with poles to hold clothing and an awning overhead to give shade.

I went to a bench in the middle of the back row and waited to see what the process was. Soon another bather came in, took his bench, and proceeded calmly

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to remove all his clothes and walk down to the water. Most of the men were naked, but a few wore trunks, so I undressed quickly, pulled on my trunks and dashed into the sea.

As I swam out, I could see that there was another section for women, just beyond the men's, divided by the fence on shore, but not at all in the water. There were only a few women swimming then, and all wore bathing suits. But soon a young girl walked to the water in a dressing gown, dropped it and plunged naked into the sea. On the beach several women were lying nude, sunning themselves on the benches.

The water was warm, with almost no surf, and I soon had enough, swam back to shore, climbed on a bench, and reflected on how simple and childlike the Russians could be in some matters, while so complex and mature in others.

There wasn't the slightest trace of consciousness or indecency about their nakedness. With or without trunks, the men swam together or played a game which consisted of throwing pebbles at the feet of anyone who lingered at the edge of the water. A few men who wore trunks at first peeled them off later. They simply preferred swimming that way, while the women seemed to prefer to wear suits.

The blonde girl sitting at the door inside the enclosure bothered me a bit, but she paid no more attention to the men than she would have to animals. She wandered idly across the beach once, stopping to talk to one or two men lying face up on their benches, and proceeded to pick up a piece of paper which had

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been tossed on the shore. Then she strolled back and took her place again at the desk.

The midday sun was burning, and after lying in it for a while to dry, I dressed and walked back to the hotel.

By the time lunch came the food situation was obviously well in hand. Breakfast had come promptly at 9 A.M., with fruit, bread, and coffee — and only a small plate of caviar and a dish of liver as extras. For lunch they brought to my cubbyhole above the dining room a platter of chicken, rice, fried potatoes, and cucumber, which was just my size, and I succeeded in exchanging the bottles of champagne and Madeira for a glass of milk.

Thus I passed exactly one week, eating and sleeping, swimming and reading.

The second time I went swimming, I almost went in with a lot of unclad ladies. I went back to the enclosure where I had been the day before, and was just about to enter when I detected from within the sounds of feminine voices, cackling like a lot of hens in a yard. I stood on tiptoes, looked over the fence, and saw an array of pink clothes hanging on poles and white carcasses spread on benches. I ducked quickly and read the sign. The enclosure was reserved for women that day, and the one beyond was for men. In this land of equality of sexes, they even changed swimming holes every day.

I walked down to the men's lot, put on my trunks, and took a quick dip. There were more women next door that day, and they wore less clothing. One par-

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ticularly elegant bather strolled down to the shore, wearing a sun hat, chest strap, and nothing else, and calmly sat in water up to her waist. Another young girl, wearing nothing at all, paddled out about a hundred yards, to where some boys were passing in rowboats, passed the time of day with them, and then swam back to shore.

As I lay in the noonday sun, an elderly woman in a straw hat and white dress, followed by the girl attendant, walked through the yard, talking to the men. She came to me, and said, 'Don't stay in the sun too long.' I said, 'No.' She asked, 'Haven't you something to put over your shoulders?' I said, 'No.' She said, 'You'll burn.'

The conversation was embarrassing. Rows of naked men were listening, and although I had on my trunks, I felt naked myself. To put an end to it, I said, 'I don't understand Russian.'

The elderly woman put her hands on her hips, astonished, and said, 'You don't understand Russian!' I said, 'No.' She asked, 'Then where do you come from?' I said, 'America.'

'Well, well, from America,' she said. 'Well, listen, don't stay in this sun more than two minutes or you'll burn.'

The young girl patted my shoulder, and said, 'Burn.'

Figuring my two minutes were up, I climbed off the bench and went back under the awning. Then two old crones came there with buckets, picking up waste paper. Four women at a time was too much. I put on my clothes and went back to the hotel.



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That noon the maid lingered over her cleaning of the room, eyed me cautiously, and then edged up to the desk where I was reading the theater section of a Sunday New York *Times*. She pointed to an eight-column cut of a musical comedy, 'Pal Joey,' showing handsome couples dancing on a stage, and asked, 'What's that?' 'An operetta,' I answered, the nearest word I could find in Russian to musical comedy. 'Are those artists?' she asked. I said, 'Yes.' She sighed, and stared at them a long time.

'What time is it now in New York?' she asked. I counted back eight hours, and said, 'Four o'clock.' 'In the morning!' she gasped. I said, 'Yes, there is always eight hours' difference between here and New York.' She repeated, 'Eight hours,' and thought of that for a while.

Then she seemed to want to show off her own knowledge. She pointed to the veranda where a pair of swallows had built a mud nest in a corner of the roof, with a little entrance on the inner side, facing my windows and protected from the sea winds. The birds fluttered back and forth, crawling in the nest now and then, and sticking out their white, black-capped faces to squawk and peck at intruders who tried to cling to the sides. The maid said, 'There are two.' I nodded. She said, 'Soon there will be more.' With that, she finished her cleaning and left.

One overcast day I walked in town to see Sochi. Never before had I seen a resort the likes of this one. There were no hotdog stands, no dance halls, no souvenir shops, no merry-go-rounds, no fancy um-

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brellas, no casinos, no sand shovels and buckets — nothing you would find at an American or European beach. It was just a plain Russian town with beaches at each end, a dock in the middle and stores along the main streets.

Back from the shore were a soccer field, where a team was training, and a sports park where tennis and volley ball were being played. There were long paths through the parks.

In the foothills of the Caucasus, overlooking the town, were broad buildings which had once been fashionable hotels and now were sanatoria. And a sanatorium here did not mean a place for sick people. It was for the well, to keep them well. The whole setting, with its warm sun, clean air, salt water, and fresh countryside, was made for health.

It seemed at first like a funny idea for a beach resort. But then it seemed to be a good one. Probably better than our own. I made a second expedition into town, to take some photographs, and had a lot of fun: I got myself arrested.

It was at the top of the hill, above the town, where a couple of statues of a man and woman, tossing balls, marked the entrance to Sochi. I picked a general view of the town, with the statue of the woman for foreground, and went behind her to make the picture. A couple of ragamuffins came up, waving their arms and patting their chests in front of the camera, to have their pictures taken. I waited until they passed. And then came the militiaman, waving his arms, but not for the camera — for me.

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'What are you doing?' he asked belligerently.

'Making a photograph,' I said.

'Of what?' he asked.

'Of that statue,' I said.

He looked suspiciously at the rear end of the statue, and all the more suspiciously at me. He asked who had given me permission to take photographs. No one. He asked for my documents. They were in the hotel. So he waved for me to follow him and we went down the hill and along a side street to the police station.

In the entry was a roaring drunk, being watched by a militiaman. In the front room was an emaciated young woman, holding an infant to her naked breast, and answering questions for an officer at the desk. I was led past both of them to an officer in the back room. The earlier dialogue was repeated, and then I was told to wait in the hall. After a while, I was led upstairs to the chief, a big, fair, jovial man in a white uniform. He said, 'Hello,' and, 'Sit down.'

The chief seemed to understand better than the others the artistic value of the rear end of a lady statue. He nodded sympathetically as I explained what I had been doing.

'It's all right to take photographs close up of statues and pretty girls,' he said, 'but you must not take photographs which show the town and harbor. If you want to take them, ask us for permission. That's all.'

The militiaman showed me out. The least I had expected was to lose my film, but they hadn't even taken that. And they had given me a chance to see the inside workings of a Soviet police station.

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That was June 21. When I returned to my room, I found the maid had been wrong about more birds coming. Three little eggs lay broken on the concrete floor of the veranda. And a lot of tough sparrows were quarreling about the nest.

There was a parable in that. For a lot of other tough birds were gathering on the near-by frontier to invade that night another nest.

## Ivan Goes to War

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ONE day later in the year than Napoleon, Hitler invaded Russia, June 22, 1941. Beyond that, much as they were to be compared, there was little comparison between the campaigns of the nineteenth-century French emperor and the twentieth-century German Fuehrer. For Napoleon marched to Moscow with a mobile column, turned around and marched back again. Hitler flung himself on Russia with a huge force, stopped short of Moscow, and hung on for a fight to the finish.

When it began, that fateful Sunday at 4 A.M., one hundred and seventy divisions, numbering more than two million men, with ten thousand tanks and ten thousand planes, were unleashed against the Soviet Union. With them, death and devastation stalked onto the steppes of southern, the forests of western, the tundra of northern Russia.

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The invasion caught the Soviets by surprise. Despite all alarms and warnings, they were not ready. Unexpectedly, bombs showered down on Kiev, Sebastopol, Kaunas, Zhitomir, and other important cities of the rear. Shells rained on Brest-Litovsk, Belostok, and other towns on the frontier. Border posts were rapidly overwhelmed. So complete was the surprise that junior pilots rushed about their airports, seeking superior officers for orders to take off, while they themselves were being bombed. And many of the highest officers of the army and navy and officials of state were away from their posts on vacation.

It was not until 5.30 A.M., one hour and a half after the invasion, that Graf von der Schulenburg called on Foreign Minister Molotov at the Kremlin to inform him that Germany had started war on the Soviet Union because of Red army concentrations opposite the German border. It was not until 12.15 P.M. that the Russian people heard, in a broadcast by Molotov, that they had been attacked without previous demands, without a declaration of war.

On the frontier there was pandemonium. Dive-bombers screeched in the sky. Parachutists tumbled to the earth. Caterpillar treads clanked on the ground. Automatic gunners raced wildly on motorcycles. Motorized infantry rolled in trucks. Behind these flashing swords of Blitzkrieg came the shields, endless columns of men and horses, covering all with the darkness of occupation, the hideous nightmare that was to last many long nights.

The first directions taken by the Wehrmacht, ac-

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according to the general headquarters of the Red army, were Shauli, Kaunas, Volkovisk, Korobinsk, Vladimir-Volynsk, Rava Russka, and Brodsk, from north to south, between the Baltic and Black Seas. Actually, they took every direction, they moved on every road, lane, and pass across the frontier, swarming into Russia.

The confusion was complete. The Red army admitted June 23 the fall of Brest-Litovsk. It fell only the next day. A washerwoman, dropping her laundry and drying her hands when she saw the Germans, took a rifle, helped one border post stand off the enemy, then went back to a garrison and brought reinforcements. For a day that post held. The 99th Red army infantry division, commanded by Colonel Jacob Kreuzer, retreated from Przemyśl, in Old Poland, then pushed back and recaptured the town. They held until ordered to withdraw. But all around them the Soviet frontiers fell.

Behind the frontier, loudspeakers blared orders: mobilization of men between twenty-three and thirty-six years old in the fourteen western military districts, air-raid and anti-gas precautions, a state of siege throughout European Russia. That night, as they had in all other cities of Europe, the lights of Russia were blacked out.

And so, all unwilling, Russia became Armageddon.

I had what seemed at first to be the very bad, but what turned out to be the very good, luck to witness the outbreak of war, not from Moscow, but from the

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peaceful, sunlit terrace of the Riviera Hotel at Sochi.

It was a beautiful Sunday, warmed by the sun, freshly washed by the rain, after a tempest the previous day. The Black Sea dashed briskly against the breakwater and sent its waters rushing across the concrete walk. The war had been on for hours, but I had no premonition of it, as I sat on the hill above the beach and watched the waves.

A telegram had come for me that morning from Moscow, saying: 'Plane immediately.' Idly, I wondered what the reason for it was, personal or business. Witt Hancock, my predecessor in Moscow, had been planning vaguely to come through Moscow if he were ordered home from his post in Turkey. In that case I had left word I would return to Moscow to meet him. That, I decided, must be the reason for the telegram. I would go, of course, but there was no hurry. There was no plane anyway until the next day. But the reason for the telegram turned out to be business. Witt Hancock, instead of going home, went on to India and Batavia, there to be lost in Java. And I was going back to the war.

As I strolled back from the beach, through the garden, I saw a crowd gathered around the loudspeaker in front of the hotel. A flat emotionless voice was speaking. It was Molotov's. He was saying:

Without any claim having been presented to the Soviet Union, without a declaration of war, German troops attacked our country, attacked our borders at many points and bombed from their airplanes our cities...



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This unheard-of attack on our country is perfidy unparalleled in the history of civilized nations. The attack on our country was perpetrated despite the fact that a treaty on non-aggression had been signed between the U.S.S.R. and Germany, and that the Soviet government has most faithfully abided by all the provisions of this treaty . . .

The entire responsibility for this predatory attack on the Soviet Union falls fully and completely on the German Fascist rulers . . .

The Soviet government has ordered our troops to repulse the predatory assault and to drive the German troops from the territory of our country . . .

Ours is a righteous cause. The enemy shall be defeated. Victory will be ours.

As he spoke, his audience listened silently, first in sheer amazement, then in stunned realization. One or two women wept quietly, and moved away, but most of them stood, as though in a trance, astonished, then resigned to the ghastly news. I headed upstairs to my room, and as I passed a maid on the stairs, she gasped:

‘They attacked us!’

I felt worse than the Russians, for I was away from my post, and the greatest story of them all was breaking. All the ugly forecasts I had heard for Russia, in case of war, came to me: It would last three weeks to three months . . . the Germans might reach Moscow in five days . . . Moscow would be leveled by a single bombing. I might never get there in time.

The rest of the day I spent in waiting for things that never came. I put in a telephone call for Moscow for

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4 P.M. It never came. I was told a man would come with a ticket for Moscow on the next day's plane at 9 P.M. He never came. Then, I was told, all planes were grounded. I was stranded at the other end of Russia, with no roads between me and Moscow, with no way of getting there except by train. And the last train for Moscow that day had left.

One thing which I had not awaited did come. That was a visitor. He knocked on my door, as I lay stripped on the veranda, taking a last sunbath and wishing I were in Moscow. I put on a bathrobe and let him in. Without a word he started ransacking the room. A companion stood guard at the door. I realized they were plain-clothes police, and said nothing. My visitor, a husky, young but baldish fellow, hunted vainly for a while, and finally asked heatedly:

'Where is it?'

'Where is what?' I asked.

'That camera.'

'Oh,' I said, recalling my visit the day before to the police station, and produced my Soviet FED, like a Leica, from the desk drawer.

The young man ripped it open, exposed the film to the sun, and then asked abruptly:

'Where is the other one?'

'Where is the other what?'

'Film.'

'There isn't any,' I said, which was the truth.

'There is, there must be,' he said, stamping, and resumed his search.

'I'm an American, you know, not a German,' I

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said, with the mildest voice I could manage. I didn't want any trouble.

He nodded agreement, but kept on looking. After a few minutes he began to believe there was no other film. He conferred with his colleague at the door, saluted me and left. I returned the salute as best I could, while clutching the bathrobe around me, and went back to the sun to reflect. I decided that visit was a good sign. If there were only one foreigner in town, and if he had been making photographs without permission the day before the outbreak of war, it was certainly a good idea to expose his film, at the very least, if not to arrest him.

One other thing, unexpected, came to me that day. It was a telegram which the hotel manager asked me to open. It was addressed in English to Intourist, Sochi. Since Intourist, the travel agency for foreigners, no longer existed there, and since I was the only foreigner in town, and English-speaking, it probably was for me. Actually it was for Erskine Caldwell and his wife, Margaret Bourke-White, who were in the nearby town of Sukhum, from Ambassador Steinhardt in Moscow. It informed them he was advising all Americans to leave the Soviet Union immediately unless they had compelling reasons to stay. That didn't make my prospects look any better.

Tempers ran higher as the day went on. There were bickerings and stampedings about the hotel. But underneath it all there was a current of feeling of determination, even of enthusiasm, about the war. Marching songs, blaring from loudspeakers, began to

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echo back from the mountains. The crowds grew larger and larger, listening to repeated broadcasts of Molotov's speech and successive news bulletins. Sometimes the people cheered and clapped.

That night the blackout was put into effect with surprising speed and efficiency. Blue bulbs appeared in the lights, dark curtains covered the windows, and a maid brought a candle to my room.

The next morning, Russia's second of war, I awoke with a start after a fitful night's sleep, and jumped out of bed to start working on a train ticket for Moscow. I knew the familiar rush of people trying to return to their homes, the monopoly of mobilization, the slowing of trains on darkened, crowded tracks at the start of war. I had to hurry, to get away quickly, or to be long stranded.

The first news was bad. The hotel had telephoned the railway station and was told there were no tickets for that day. I went to the station with the hotel baggageman, he slipped into the office, and returned with the news that there might be a ticket tomorrow. That 'zaftra' which meant 'mañana.'

I went into the office and made to an officer in Red army uniform what must have been a grotesquely eloquent speech in bad Russian. I told him I was an American correspondent, had been called the day before to return by plane, and, since there was no plane, I must leave that day by the train. I produced my foreign commissariat pass, and said: 'With this document I should think I might take the train today.'

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The officer nodded, and said, 'You might.'

That seemed to be all there was to it. The baggage-man remained at the station, already filling up with anxious crowds, to buy the ticket, and I walked back to the hotel for breakfast, stopping on the way at the little postoffice in the garden behind the hotel to send a telegram to Moscow, telling them I would be on the way.

In the streets squads of men were marching in civilian clothes. Houses were being bulwarked. Troops passed in trucks. The town was emptying of all except women and children.

I could not help but compare this to the France I had seen less than a year before. There was no rush of refugees on the road. In fact, as I was still to find out, it was very difficult to move at all. There was no mass crisis of nerves: the war of nerves had never reached this remote, stolid people.

If the Russian people are ever defeated, I thought, it will not be because of nerves.

On the way to the hotel I asked a man what the morning's radio news had been.

'We are attacking,' he said.

Back at the hotel there was another shock for me. The baggageman telephoned to say that, despite my pre-breakfast interview, the station would not sell him a ticket to Moscow for me. Again rose that specter of being stuck in Sochi, perhaps finally to be escorted over the border to Iran or Turkey, just to the south, while world-shaking news was developing at my post in the north. If I did not get out of Sochi that

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day, I was convinced I would never escape. So I packed my bags, paid my bill, and trudged back, under a searing sun, to the railroad station.

By then crowds were camped all around the station, surrounded by shapeless masses of belongings, rolled in blankets. On the lawns squatted the women, their children dashing around excitedly over the grass. On the sidewalks, in long queues leading to the ticket offices, were troops. Around them stalked naval officers in white, army officers in khaki. The place was besieged.

I weaved my way through the lines to the office I had visited in the morning. It was locked. But there was a sign on the door, saying the officer in charge of dispatching troops to their mobilization centers would be on duty there, and a few men were waiting. I waited with them. Soon the door opened, and the troops, some still in plain clothes, formed a line. I tagged on behind them. They started through the office, laying their mobilization cards on the table, announcing their destinations, 'Rostov,' 'Voronezh,' or 'Moscow,' and receiving their tickets. When it was my turn, I put my foreign commissariat pass on the table, said 'Moscow,' and held my breath. The officer, the same to whom I had talked in the morning, looked up, grinned and said, 'Nu ladno,' Russian equivalent for 'Okay.'

I grasped the ticket, and dashed for the train waiting on the track.

I had never before been on a Russian train. All my travels in the Soviet Union had been by plane or

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by car. This was to be a rough initiation into the mysteries of the Russian railway, for six people were already standing, with proprietary airs, in the compartment to which I was assigned. There were two middle-aged men, two women, apparently their wives, and two young men. And there were only four bunks.

'Oh ho, here comes another one of ours,' chortled a woman, so I knew there was no mistake. This was really my compartment. I dropped my bags and fled back to the platform, leaving to them the distribution of those four beds among seven persons.

Outside, the baggageman, who had caught up with me by then, suggested I go on a hunt for bread, but I refused to move away from that precious train. He returned after a while with a glass of pink sodawater, but no bread. It had all been bought up by the crowd swarming around the station. As the sun was setting, the train pulled out, without warning whistle or bell, and I swung aboard.

The long, heavily laden train rattled slowly over the fragile single track skirting the Black Sea, in the shadow of the great, snow-capped Caucasus Mountains rising to the east. I stood in the passageway, and prayed fervently that it would keep on rattling ahead until it reached Moscow. But there were many stops to be made.

At station after station we halted to take on more passengers. Most of them were rugged, bronzed little fellows, mountaineers clutching a rifle in one hand, a loaf of bread in the other. They went to war with a grin, waving back at the little clusters of family and

friends who had come to bid them farewell. Behind them, at the village stations, musicians sat on the dirt paths, playing accordions. From the towns they went off to the tunes of martial music, blared from loudspeakers over the wooden platforms. Everywhere they went cheerfully.

In the purple nightfall the train began to pick up speed as it cleared the foothills of the Caucasus, and the Black Sea beaches, already surrounded by barbed wire and patrolled by armed men, swished by mysteriously. It was time to go to bed.

I walked down the passageway, and there were my six room-mates, sitting on the bottom bunks. They were waiting for me.

'You go there,' said one of the middle-aged men, waving at the upper left bunk. I climbed into it, took off my outer clothes, slipped under the blanket and rolled close to the wall, facing it and wondering how many more would sleep in this place, hardly big enough for one.

There were thrashings and bumpings and gigglings below, and then the lights went out. I was still alone in bed.

A hand tapped my shoulder. It was the same middle-aged man. 'You will be alone,' he said. I rolled over and saw through the gloom that he was getting into one lower bunk with his wife. The other couple had taken the second lower bunk. The two young men were in the upper, opposite me.

'That's democracy,' the middle-aged man said from his bed.



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At the first stop, the next morning, there was a rush from the train. Being an abashed novice, I waited in bed until the others had left, and then dressed. By the time I reached the passageway, the train was under way again, and the passengers were gathered around a fortunate one who had found a morning newspaper. He was reading the communiqué of June 23: ‘

... directions of Shauli, Kaunas, Volkovisk, Korobinsk, Vladimir-Volynsk, Rava Russka, and Brodsk... In the Belostok and Brest directions the Germans succeeded in capturing the cities of Brest, Kolno, and Lomja....

‘Our territory?’ someone asked incredulously.

‘Of course, our territory.’

A great paradox of this first period of the war was that, while the outside world expected the Germans to march through Russia in five days, three weeks, or, at most, three months, the Russians expected them to be held at the border or thrown back onto their own ground. Both were disappointed. For the Red army, to which the Russians had sacrificed many of the comforts of life for twenty years, and which they had been told was strong enough to stand off the entire capitalist world, was unable to check the Germans on the border. But it was able to check them somewhere.

It was not only in quest of the communiqué that the passengers had rushed off the train at the first stop. They had gone foraging for food. I had the unpleasant surprise of finding there was no diner on the train, and that if I was to eat at all, in the incalculable number of

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days before reaching Moscow, it would have to be food I snatched from station platforms between stops. At the same time I had the pleasant surprise of finding that the train was bowling along beautifully, as though there was no war.

For two days it went that way. Nonchalantly it puffed through the grain fields of the North Caucasus, past the swampy shores of the Sea of Azov, beyond which the turrets of Taganrog rose in the distance like a mirage, to the Don city of Rostov. Past the still busy steel plants of the Donetsk Basin, it rolled into the black-earth region to Voronezh. Up the main line, it steamed through Kursk, Orel, and Tula.

At each stop I dashed with the others for food. Only once did I get any. That was toward the close of the second day, when my middle-aged compartment-mate, taking pity on my inexperience, guided me to the head of a queue and bought me a glorious caviar and tomato sandwich. But I did not feel the hunger. My only desire was to get to Moscow. And in the meantime, I watched that panorama of the Caucasus, Ukraine, and Central Russia roll past the window, and I memorized that list of cities which read like a log of future battlefields.

After dark on the second day, the passengers began to stir excitedly. We were nearing Moscow. But perhaps it was being bombed and we would not be able to reach the city. If we arrived there, perhaps we would be locked in the train for the night, because of the curfew. At least, we would be confined to the station, because there would be no automobiles to

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take us and our baggage home. Quietly, almost furtively, the train rolled through the dark suburbs to the Kursk station. We had arrived on peacetime schedule. And in Moscow the most unexpected of all things happened — nothing at all.

There were no restrictions on the platform. Each passenger picked up his bags and walked through the blue-lighted station to the sidewalk. There the broad square spread tranquilly. The usual number of pedestrians, small at that after-midnight hour, walked in the streets. There were even taxicabs. All around, the city lay sleeping.

I went into a telephone booth and dialed the number of my assistant, Robert Magidoff. A miracle, he answered in his usual nocturnal croaking, sleep-thickened voice that was as sweet to me then as the soprano of Lily Pons. And miracle of miracles, there was still gasoline; Pavel, the chauffeur, had not been mobilized, and they would be right over for me.

Pavel brought the Ford to the sidewalk in the swooping dive he loved to affect when picking up a passenger. I climbed in with them. I was back on the job!

I had a million questions to ask, so many that for a while I asked none, but just sat back and gloried in Moscow.

The office was as tidy as ever. Robert, later to become Moscow correspondent for the National Broadcasting Company, had done a thorough, competent job. There were no complaints from New York, only an inquiry as to whether Robert had communicated with me. And the war was still being fought in the dis-

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tant directions of Vilno, Baranovichi, Lwow, and Brodsk.

I have said it turned out to be very good luck that I saw the start of the war from Sochi, not Moscow. The morning after my arrival I wrote a story of the provinces at war, of mobilization carried out with no apparent hitch, of the black-out installed effectively, of trains running promptly, of agriculture and industry working at top pitch. 'My impression,' I wrote, 'was that the Soviets got off to a smooth start.'

Later, I was to learn that was the first wartime descriptive article sent from Moscow, the first optimistic story to relieve the monotony of the five-day-three-week-three-month predictions. I saw it quoted in Japanese papers. I saw it spread across the first pages of American newspapers, under the headline:

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It was read and cabled back to Moscow by Constantin Oumansky, Soviet ambassador to Washington. He talked it over with Ralph Ingersoll, publisher of the New York *PM*, who decided Russia would hold long enough for him to make a quick trip to Moscow. I was told 'a very important man' — and I know of only one in Russia, Stalin — read it and liked it.

I tried to tell my impressions to some of the experts who had predicted a short war. They wouldn't listen. They had been wrong about the Germans reaching Moscow in five days. For on that fifth day, the communiqué said German tanks which penetrated the Vilno sector of Lithuania were cut off from their sup-

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porting infantry and the Red army counterattacked in the Lwow and Cernovitz sectors in Old Poland and Rumania. But they still insisted the war would last only three weeks to three months.

## Three Weeks of War

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THE war was so remote from Moscow, at the start, that they might have been fighting it on another continent, another planet. After a week of combat, the front zigzagged south from the Baltic Sea through the sectors of Shauli, Vilno, Minsk, Baranovich, Luzk, Lwow, and Przemysl to the Black Sea. At its nearest point it was still more than four hundred miles from Moscow, and the life of the capital was undisturbed by anything more exciting than trial air-raid alarms.

Strange events were taking place on the front, only slight echoes of which came to Moscow. The Baltic special military district issued a decree calling in all civilian arms, forbidding anyone to appear on roofs or balconies, ordering removal of all private radio antennae and making house committees responsible for handing over to the NKVD persons suspected of spreading rumors or panic. Lithuania, Latvia, and

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Estonia had been incorporated in the Soviet Union only a year before, and now some Balts were having their revenge. Men were sniping from the rooftops, women were stabbing in the streets, as the Red army retreated.

In the center of the front the Germans put on a major push around the Pripet Marshes, toward Minsk and Luzk, north and south of the bogs. The greatest tank encounter of all times was announced to have been engaged in the Luzk sector, with four thousand machines involved. What was the result? Nothing more was ever announced about it. But by the end of June, another great tank battle was reported under way in the Rovno sector, east of Luzk. Again, the Red army had fallen back, and the winning side does not retreat.

All this time the great question in Moscow was: Where is Stalin? It was his right-hand man, Molotov, not Stalin himself, who had announced to his people the German invasion. Since then the Russians had been fighting for their lives without a word from their leader. And if ever there was a time and a place when strong leadership was needed, it was then in Moscow.

Some foreign experts, who claimed to have an occult method of divining what was going on inside the Kremlin by staring at its outside, insisted Stalin was not there. They inferred he had fled to Turkey or Iran or Afghanistan or China. Others agreed Stalin was not there, but believed he simply had been vacationing in his villa at Gagri, on the Black Sea coast, when the war began, and had not yet returned. Other

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skeptical, but less malicious experts found their own answer to the question of the whereabouts of Stalin. He was, they said, 'on the fence.' In other words, he was waiting to see how the war would turn before assuming openly command of the situation.

The question became more acute when the British ambassador, Sir Stafford Cripps, returned to Moscow by plane June 27, bringing with him a military mission and a promise of aid. The mission was headed by Lieutenant-General F. N. Mason Macfarlane for the army, Admiral Miles for the navy, and Air Vice-Marshal A. C. Collier for the air force. Laurence Cadbury, chocolate manufacturer, newspaper proprietor, and representative of the Bank of England, headed an economic mission.

They certainly expected to be received immediately by Stalin. They were received at the Kremlin, the very day of their arrival. But it was by Molotov, not Stalin.

The American embassy was busy with a run-around of its own. On the day the war started, it abandoned its big office building on the Mokhovaya, facing the Kremlin. The staff went to sleep at the dacha newly leased by Ambassador Steinhardt on the Kliasma River at Tarasovka, twenty miles northeast of Moscow. They came to work at the ambassador's residence, Spaso House in the Arbat section, the West End of Moscow. After a week they made both living and working quarters at Spaso House. The eight embassy wives had flown out to Stockholm or Teheran the day before the war started. News that the be-



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loved Boxer dog of 'Pompo' von Walther, secretary of the German embassy, had been evacuated by plane to Berlin was the danger signal which prompted the American evacuation. After the outbreak of war, eleven clerks took the trans-Siberian express for Vladivostok, on their way home. Ambassador Steinhardt sought vainly to see anyone more important than a vice-commissar for information as to the plans of the Soviet government.

From behind the scenes, however, the strong hand of someone fashioned events firmly and decisively.

The correspondents first became aware of this about noon June 28, while they were writing their dispatches from the morning newspapers at the foreign commissariat, when they were told an address at which a press conference would be given at 5 P.M. that day by an 'important person.' There was excited speculation, and there were questions to which no answer was given in advance. The address turned out to be the old Greek legation. The person turned out to be Solomon A. Lozovsky.

I had known this pleasant little house when Mme. Diamantopoulos, the former Alberta Kirchhof of Denver, Colorado, had entertained at teas in the long, many-windowed drawing room, at dinners in the dark, wood-paneled dining room, and at dances in the living room to which a delicate winding staircase led from the dining room. I had known the pleasant little Lozovsky as vice-commissar of foreign affairs, in charge of Far-Eastern matters, and an occasional guest at diplomatic dinners. Now the house was head-

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quarters for the Soviet Information Bureau, and Lozovsky had taken on the added title of vice-chief of this bureau.

We were seated around a long, green-covered table in the downstairs, back drawing room. The resident American, British, French, and Japanese correspondents, were all there, and, much to our surprise, so also were the Comintern correspondents, American, British, French, and Spanish, with whom we had never before been permitted to associate. Lozovsky walked in briskly, bobbed his gray beard at us in silent salutation, opened a magnificent briefcase before his place at the head of the table, folded his slender hands, and spoke in Russian.

Lozovsky explained that the Soviet government had decided to create the information bureau, with Alexander Shcherbakov, secretary of the Moscow district Communist Party and member of the Politburo, as director, and himself as assistant director, to issue communiqués twice daily and to hold regular conferences for foreign correspondents. The first question, he said, was the language to be used. English and French were suggested. Lozovsky was fairly fluent in both. But he brushed the proposals aside, as though he had made up his mind in advance, and announced he would speak Russian.

'After we have been meeting for several months,' he said, however, 'I'll be able to talk with you in English.'

That statement may not seem remarkable now, but it made a great impression on me at the time it was ut-

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tered. Quite casually, Lozovsky had dismissed all talk of a short war, of which he must have been aware, and had made plain, without even admitting any doubt could exist, that the Soviets were confident of their ability to wage a long war.

He proceeded to read a prepared statement, a model of the many that were to come. It was defensive propaganda (a denial of German charges that the Soviet Union had designs on the Dardanelles), a rehash of old material (German planes violated the Soviet frontier three hundred and twenty-four times in the six months before the war) — the whole spiced by Lozovskian wit. His quips were to become famous in the short time his conferences lasted. He made one the first day: The German assertion that Russia coveted the Dardanelles, he said, was 'as much like the truth as Goebbels looks like Apollo.' He had at least one like that for every conference.

Eventually, his flippancy became a nuisance. It grew more and more difficult to draw a serious answer from him. When he confirmed the Soviet destruction of the Dnieper Dam, a tremendous sacrificial act, it was with a casual 'Why, of course,' in reply to a question. His information grew less and less reliable. He would insist the Germans were far from any given point, Nikolayev, for example, only to have its fall announced by the same night's communiqué. The attendance at his conferences and the space given to them abroad gradually dwindled. His relations with the press grew strained four months later, after the correspondents were evacuated to Kuibyshev. They

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broke ten months later when the correspondents returned to Moscow, while he remained in Kuibyshev with the diplomatic corps.

A year later, when a flattering remark was made about Lozovsky's press conferences, during a luncheon for Shcherbakov in Moscow, a dignitary at the head table leaned over and asked quietly whether I thought the conferences should be renewed. I had to reply that I preferred the newspapers in the morning, with their military dispatches, to conferences in the afternoon, with their vacuous statements.

The inquirer was Nikolai Palgunov, the real power over the foreign press in Moscow. As chief of the press department of the foreign commissariat, he was hated by the correspondents for the severe censorship he exercised; for the slipshod manner in which he organized, or failed to organize, trips and interviews; and for his own person, with its kinky shock of brown hair, its bulging eyes and its red face, which twisted into weird grimaces, like an india-rubber face, being pinched from the sides. By his Soviet colleagues he was feared, for he was reputed to have important contacts somewhere in the central committee of the Communist Party. Certain it was that Lozovsky and his press conferences passed. A Red army colonel who started to organize trips for correspondents, as a sort of conducting officer for the Sovinformburo, was transferred to Tashkent to teach in a military school. Palgunov remained.

But for the first period of the war, a new foundation had been laid for Soviet propaganda.

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Suddenly, Stalin stepped to the fore. He did so in the simple, undramatic manner characteristic of the man, in a way that was as understandable to the Russian as it was bizarre to foreigners. At 6.30 A.M., July 3, when the Soviet radio was starting its usual day's transmission and Stalin was ending his usual night's work, he sat before a microphone in the Kremlin and talked to his people.

There was no special occasion for the speech, such as May Day or an anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. There was no announcement in advance, to attract listeners. Stalin simply had something he wanted to say, and he said it at daybreak. For the rest of the day the speech was read periodically by announcers, and broadcast through loudspeakers in the streets and squares. The text was posted on fences and walls. By nightfall, everyone knew the words of the leader.

'Comrades, citizens, brothers and sisters, men of our army and navy,' he said, 'my words are addressed to you, dear friends.'

In plain words he told them that German troops were occupying Lithuania, much of Latvia, western White Russia and western Ukraine; that German planes were bombing Murmansk, Smolensk, Kiev, Odessa, and Sebastopol, and that 'grave danger overhangs our country.'

He explained that the Germans had been able to advance because of their sudden, treacherous attack, executed by forces better prepared for war. He explained that his government had previously made its

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non-aggression pact with Germany to gain a year and a half of peace and time to prepare for war.

Having explained two points which had sorely puzzled the Russians, he went on to tell them what they must do next: realize the terrible danger in which they stood, give everything for the front, tighten the rear, and, when forced to retreat, scorch the earth. He ordered them to form guerrilla bands behind the German lines and Popular Guards behind the Red army lines.

He announced that the state committee of defense, of which he himself was head, had taken over full authority, and invoked his own name in calling the people to 'rally around the party of Lenin and Stalin, and around the Soviet government, so as to render self-sacrificing support to the Red army and Red navy, to demolish the enemy and secure victory.'

The important thing was that Stalin, the man of steel, had taken hold of the war.

A more surprising speech came five days later. The correspondents were told, the morning of July 8, that there would be an important broadcast that night at 11 P.M. When they submitted telegrams, warning their offices to be listening at that hour, Palgunov coyly suggested: 'Why not tell them it will be a speech by Litvinov?'

That was a surprise! Litvinov had been in retirement since his replacement by Molotov as foreign commissar just after the May Day celebration of 1939. Periodically, it was rumored abroad that he had been

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shot, although we in Moscow had seen him from time to time, sitting obscurely in his seat as a Leningrad deputy at the Supreme Soviet, or with his English wife, Ivy Low, at the Bolshoi Theater.

Yet, what was more natural than that he should emerge now. He had been champion of collective security and cooperation with the Western Powers during his career as commissar. He had been shelved when that policy went bankrupt and Russia signed the pact with Germany. Still, he had been carefully wrapped up and kept on ice for another day. That day had come.

Litvinov was not heard, either in the Soviet Union, because he went on after the domestic transmission had ended, or in the United States, because atmospheric conditions were bad. He was picked up in England. The next day the press of all three countries printed his speech.

It had a prophetic note. His main point was this: 'It is all-important that Hitler should not have a moment's respite, that he should be disappointed in his hope of a *de facto* truce in the west. While his aim is to strike at one adversary at a time, *ours* should be to strike together, simultaneously, without respite, untiringly. Each blow struck *now* is ten times as effective, and entails infinitely less expenditure and sacrifice, than if it is delivered when any one of his adversaries become weaker.'

The words '*ours*' and '*now*' were underlined in his original text. The word 'untiringly' was typed 'untimingly,' and corrected in pencil.

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Litvinov was to go as ambassador to the United States. The issue of the second front, which his speech raised, was to go on as one of the most controversial of the war.

The first three weeks of war closed July 12, and it being Saturday, I decided to take a half-day off. Ambassador Steinhardt invited me to the Tarasovka dacha for the afternoon, and there I was an unconscious witness to the aftermath of one of the great political acts of the war.

I arrived early. The ambassador was out rowing on the Kliasma with the first secretary of the embassy, Charley Dickerson. Most of the other guests had not yet come. So I went downstream with two British navy boys and took a swim in the water, warm, thick, and black as coffee. When we returned, a buffet supper was spread on the terrace and the guests were there.

Sir Stafford Cripps, natty in a costume of white trousers and blue coat, was talking confidentially to Ambassador Steinhardt in a corner. John Trant, British consul-general, John Russell, third secretary, and the rest of the staff of the British embassy were all attired in their best suits. Their heads shone from combing, their cheeks from shaving. They were obviously excited.

After the party I rode to Moscow with two RAF officers, one of whom remarked casually that Sir Stafford should be 'sitting on top of the world.' I carried a coded telegram which Ambassador Steinhardt asked



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me to drop at the telegraph office. Only the next day did I learn what it was all about.

On July 12, Great Britain and the Soviet Union had become allies. An agreement on joint action in the war against Germany had been signed at the Kremlin at 5.15 P.M. that afternoon by Cripps and Molotov.

The pact was arranged in two talks between Cripps and Stalin. It was simply worded, with only two provisions — that the two powers should extend each other mutual aid and not conclude separate peace.

During the ceremony of signature, the question came up of when the agreement should go into effect. 'Immediately,' said Cripps. 'Let's have a protocol.' His legalistic staff shuddered, and murmured something about getting authority from London, a process of coding, transmission, and decoding which would take days. 'I'll take the responsibility,' said Cripps.

Lacy Baggeley, counselor of the embassy, and Dan Lascelles, first secretary, went to a side room, where they were offered a German typewriter. 'I won't write my protocol on a German typewriter,' said Lascelles, and after a search an American machine was produced. The protocol took about an hour.

While the others were waiting, champagne was served, a very good, dry Caucasian champagne — 'as dry as a cracker,' as one guest put it. Chocolate bonbons also were passed around, perhaps to show Laurence Cadbury that the Soviets had chocolate of their own. No one touched it. Stalin, looking small and tired, stood with Marshal Boris Shaposhnikov, his principal military adviser and chief of the Red army

### THREE WEEKS OF WAR

general staff, and kept peeking up, almost timidly, at the former imperial colonel. Then the protocol was brought in, signatures, blue ribbons, and red wax seals were affixed, photographs were taken, and the agreement was made.

While the photographs were being taken, John Trant, roly-poly little consul-general who once toured America as an actor and whose favorite pastime was parodying Haile Selassie, stood beside Stalin. He nudged the leader and asked: 'Why don't you sign, too?' Stalin was puzzled, and said, 'That's the foreign commissar's job.' 'I see,' said Trant. 'I have my ambassador sign for me, too.' Stalin did not think this was funny. He looked at Trant, wondering who he was.

The agreement was announced jointly in Moscow and London at 2 P.M., July 13, and the following day the *Pravda* spread across its front page the text of the agreement, an editorial and two glorious photographs, showing John Trant, standing beside Stalin like a sparrow with its head cocked to one side, watching Cripps and Molotov sign. The paper was placed on Cripps' desk, with a note:

'The signing of the Stalin-Trant pact.'

The Soviet authorities gave the agreement a good press, but it was not swallowed quickly by the public. As it was being announced on the radio, I heard a Russian say: 'I thought we were signing with honest people.' There had been too much anti-British propaganda before the war for the people to be able to make an immediate turn-about.

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On the front, a miracle had happened, the first of so many that were to be performed that they became commonplace in this war. The Soviet communiqué for July 10 announced: 'Nothing of consequence occurred.'

If it had announced the fall of Moscow, that communiqué could not have been more startling. For the first time the Blitz had been taken out of the German Krieg, the Wehrmacht had been fought to a standstill, it had been forced to halt and regroup its units. This had happened in the country that was to collapse in three weeks to three months.

At the close of the third week, the communiqué for July 12 announced the Germans were attacking again toward Pskov, in the Baltic sector, Vitebsk, in central White Russia, and Novograd Volynsk, in the Ukraine. By now the Germans' objectives had become clear. They were Leningrad, Moscow, and Kiev.

By now, also, the Soviet Union had laid the foundation, militarily, politically, in propaganda — even in point of controversy with its allies — for a long war.

## The Experts Exposed

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THE WORLD was wrong about Soviet Russia. Friend and foe alike failed to see the tremendous potentialities of this one-sixth of the world, the enormous strength of these hundred and ninety-three million people. Adolf Hitler was finally to admit it in his October 3 speech at the Sportspalast, Berlin, opening the Nazi 1941 winter relief campaign, in a passage as significant as any that could ever be uttered about the war in Russia.

‘We have been mistaken about one thing,’ the Reichsfuehrer said. ‘We had no idea how gigantic the preparations of this enemy were against Germany and Europe . . .’

There was an ironic touch in the Fuehrer’s words:

‘That I can say now. I say it only today because I can say that this enemy is already broken and will never rise again.’

He went right on, making the same mistake!

## MOSCOW DATELINE

'Her power had been assembled against Europe, of which unfortunately most had no idea, and many even today have no idea,' he said.

He himself had no idea, for two months later, the Red army was to rise, unbroken, and drive the Wehrmacht away from the gates of Moscow.

In that passage Hitler outlined unconsciously the phenomenon which eventually emerged clearly as a great factor in determining the early course of the war in Russia — universal miscalculation and underestimation of the strength of the Soviet Union. The mystery that was Soviet Russia remained a mystery until the most gigantic of all military campaigns exposed the nation in all its power. And it exposed at the same time, in all their ignorance, the experts who had professed for twenty years to know all about the Soviet Union.

The whole episode of experts on the Soviet Union was one of the strangest chapters in a long, strange story. For this régime, of all that rose after the first World War, presented an enigma that was a veritable magnet for experts. It was not something which one took or left alone. It was something which one fervently approved or violently denounced. It was not something about which one knew a little or quite a lot. It was something about which one knew absolutely nothing or absolutely everything. Yet, as it turned out, it was nearly every expert, for nearly every great power, whose judgment was the worst.

Usually it is a dull business, raking over the dirty coals of a burned-out fire and finding the fagots that

## THE EXPERTS EXPOSED

failed to burn. But here it is of vital importance. For if Germany had known the real truth or the strength and intentions of the Soviet Union, how the course of the whole war might have been changed! If Finland, Hungary, Slovakia, and Rumania had foreseen the months of terrible struggle ahead, how their attitudes might have been altered! If the United States and Great Britain had realized the potentialities of their new ally, how much better they might have taken advantage of their opportunities!

Who were the experts who were at fault, who made the errors which cost so much? Here the paradox grows all the greater. For the country which paid the most, Germany, had without doubt the best of the experts.

The German embassy in Moscow was as fine a collection of diplomats, observers, and students as has ever been assembled in a single mission. It was headed by Graf von der Schulenburg, a diplomat of the old school, tall, gray-haired, distinguished in appearance, dignified and aloof in bearing, subtle yet firm in his dealings. He devoted a long career to Russia, starting as consul in Tiflis, ending as dean of the diplomatic corps in Moscow. To all who knew him he was the ideal ambassador and his staff was the ideal staff.

He had two counselors. One was Gustave Hilger, little known abroad, but a huge figure behind the scenes of Soviet-German relations before the war, and undoubtedly the best of the experts. There was nothing about Hilger, pale and quiet, with dull brown hair and thick-rimmed glasses, of average size and

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middle age, and lacking in any color, to attract public attention. But it was he who negotiated the Soviet-German pact of friendship which preceded the outbreak of war in the west. And it was he who went to Berlin with Molotov, then prime minister, and served as interpreter in his conversations with Hitler which preceded the outbreak of war in the east. He was born in Russia, of German parents, had spent most of his life in Russia, began his diplomatic career there as a simple attaché and rose through the ranks to counselor-minister. If any foreigner could have known the Soviet Union, it was Hilger. He was to join Hitler's headquarters on the eastern front later — and lose his son in the battle of Moscow.

The other counselor was Herr von Tippelskirch, a patient, white-haired little career diplomat with an enormous capacity for detail. Under him were Doctor Gebhardt von Walther, sleek, sharp first secretary, with a mind as nimble as a weasel's; Hans Meissner, spoiled but smart son of Hitler's chief of chancellery; and a galaxy of other bright young men.

The military side of that embassy was equally imposing. It was headed by General Ernst Koestring, the highest ranking of the military attachés, the dean of them all, just as Schulenburg was dean of the diplomats. He, too, had been born in Russia, of German parents, had passed much of his career here, and should have known the country. He, too, had a large staff of intelligent, trained observers.

What happened to the dispatches which must have been turned out by this brilliant constellation of ex-

## THE EXPERTS EXPOSED

perts? The truth is hidden in the archives of the Wilhelmstrasse, and may never be known. There are two possible explanations for why Germany was so wrong in her estimate of the Soviet Union. These experts must have had some inkling of the enormous might of the state they had lived in for so long and studied so intently. But their dispatches might have been colored by what they knew their Fuehrer wanted to hear, an account of misery, weakness, and disorganization under Communism. And what they did dare to say might have been disregarded by superiors who hypnotized themselves by their own anti-Comintern propaganda.

The other side of the Axis, Italy, also had a capable embassy. It was headed by Augusto Rosso, another career diplomat of the old school, but the complete antithesis of Schulenburg, small in stature, friendly in manner, and gentle in his dealings. He had served brilliantly in Washington, but here his day was passed. He still cocked his black hat back on his head, shoved his hands into his side pockets, and acted gracefully at the eternal coming-and-going ceremonies at railroad stations. Socially, he was probably Moscow's best. But diplomatically, he was inactive. His favorite way of spending a day was to walk in his garden during the morning with his big black spaniel, Pumpkin, take a ride out of town in the afternoon with his American wife, Frances, in their open-topped roadster, and play poker all evening with the young Americans. I remember one night when we played until 6 A.M. at the apartment of Captain Joseph A. Michela, United States assistant military attaché, out on the Moscow



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River, and walked home in the sunrise, while the car carrying the ambassador's NKVD escort chugged along behind us.

The expert of the Italian embassy was Guido Relli, whose rank was that of attaché, but whose knowledge of Russia was assumed to be enormous. He was born near Trieste, of Austrian parents, but became a prisoner of war in Russia where he was visiting at the outbreak of the first World War. From then on his life was inextricably involved with Russia, and in the days when the reckoning was about to be made, he was one of those most heeded in the small groups that clustered in corners during diplomatic receptions, spoke Russian as easily as German, Italian, English, or French, recited passages from the latest editorial of *Pravda* and debated its significance. He wept when he heard of the war in the east and cried: 'This is the end ...'

The Allies, too, had their experts. The most industrious were the members of the coffee club known as the GETS, the initials standing for Greek, English, Turkish, and Serb, the principals being Christophe Diamantopoulos, minister of Greece, Sir Stafford Cripps, ambassador of Great Britain, Haidar Aktay, ambassador of Turkey, and Milan Gavrilovich, minister of Yugoslavia. They gathered each morning, usually in the sunlit sitting room of Sir Stafford, at the back of the British embassy, once the home of the Haritonenko family of sugar merchants, across the river from the Kremlin. They sat over their coffee, looking through the tall windows, facing Sir Stafford's

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garden and tennis court, debated the problems, information, and interpretation of the day.

If nothing else, one little incident should have convinced the GETS of the smartness of the régime they were trying to decipher. When Stalin became prime minister, they sent their cards to the Kremlin with the letters PF (*pour féliciter*) penned on the corners, a delicate bit of diplomatic business which Bolsheviki could hardly be expected to understand. But back came Stalin's cards, with PR (*pour répondre*) penned on the corners, the ultimate in correctness.

The GETS had several troubles. One was that they were gathered together to exchange their misinformation and to correlate their misinterpretations, but they could not often agree. There was the classic case of the dispatch Haidar Aktay sent to his government, saying, in effect, 'The British ambassador told me this, but I don't have much confidence in his judgment.' A report of this came to Sir Stafford's desk. He glanced at it, waved it aside, and said: 'This must be a mistake.' The next morning, the GETS met as usual over their coffee.

The GETS' big trouble was that they were not on the 'inside.' In the days when the Soviet Union was trying to keep out of trouble with Germany, it was a rare occasion when one of their number could get into the Kremlin. When he did, it was usually only to see a second-rate figure. They had access to little information beyond the ordinary published material. They were on the way to their disintegration.

The Russians sent Gavrilovich away first, when

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they broke relations with Yugoslavia, Belgium, and Norway. Then, after the Germans completed their occupation of Greece and Crete, the Soviets sent away Diamantopoulos. Cripps went away of his own volition, just before the war started. That left Haidar Aktay as the last and only one of the GETS. That Cripps ever returned was not because of their coffee-cup conversations.

The United States embassy made small pretense to expertness. The ambassador, Laurence A. Steinhardt, was best described by a fellow ambassador as 'the best consul who ever came to Moscow.' He negotiated for months to open a consulate-general in Vladivostok. He argued for weeks over exit visas for Americans who had adopted Soviet nationality and then wanted to change their minds. He was known to call on the foreign commissariat and protest against the cancellation of the driving license of one of his chauffeurs for traffic violations. His peak was probably the time he shouted to his telephone operator, 'You call up Vyshinsky, and tell him that if my toilet isn't working in one hour, I'm going up there and use his.' Whether the toilet then worked has not been recorded.

Steinhardt did busy himself with the information and interpretation that occupied the time of the experts, but it was more as a lawyer than an expert that he worked at it. He would argue one side of a question for hours, and then, apparently to keep in practice, he would switch, and argue the other side. He professed to some knowledge of the Soviet Union, but never to expertness.

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The one member of the United States embassy staff who might pretend to the title of expert was Charles 'Chip' Bohlen, a smart young man who studied Russian, after Harvard, at the School of Oriental Languages in Paris, and served in Moscow four years as second secretary. He read the newspapers himself, one of the sure tags of the expert, frequented the other experts and talked with them in Russian. Shortly before the war began, he was transferred to Tokyo.

The press, too, had its quota of experts. In fact, the correspondents out-experted the diplomats, for this was the era when the cables brought ambassadors minute-to-minute instructions, leaving them little responsibility or initiative; when the news traveled swiftly, making their dispatches dusty with age by the time they reached their governments; and when airplanes brought special envoys to handle most important problems. Two United States ambassadors, Laurence A. Steinhardt and Admiral William H. Standley, and two British ambassadors, Sir Stafford Cripps and Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, encountered heart-breaking difficulties in their wartime jobs in Moscow. But as the diplomats' influence dwindled, that of the correspondents increased. Theirs was the major share in the enormous task of educating public opinion.

Their dean was A. T. Cholerton, correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* of London and a legendary figure in Moscow. For sixteen years, he had stomped around outside the Kremlin walls, tugging nervously at his stubby black beard, jingling keys in his pockets,

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dancing impatiently on the little feet that seemed hardly capable of carrying his heavy body, and raging against the régime. A Cambridge don, he had come to Moscow as a sympathizer. He remained to become a violent opponent.

After sixteen years, he still could not speak Russian. He accumulated a vast store of information and misinformation, all of which became hopelessly muddled. I have heard him describing to newcomers two of the best-known Russian dishes, Borsch and Kiev cutlets, and getting them all wrong. Yet he was of great influence.

Everyone liked him, even the Russians whom he denounced. They considered him a relic of the nineteenth-century Russian intellectuals, which made him dance all the more in anger. The embassies respected him for his long service, were flattered when he called, and heeded his utterances.

The dean of the American correspondents was Henry Shapiro, who had come to Moscow ten years before from Harvard Law School, hoping to practice at the Soviet bar, but became in turn a tourists' guide, local correspondent for Reuter's, and then chief correspondent of the United Press. Native of a Carpathian village and naturalized citizen of the United States, he knew Russia and Russian well. But his mind was fastened on the minute details and day-to-day episodes. And he was embittered by his long struggle against Slavic stolidness and unbending bureaucracy.

Before the war and at its outbreak, when the first

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errors in judgment were being made, there were few other correspondents in Moscow. I was a newcomer from the fallen city of Paris, Maurice Lovell had just come from Greece for Reuter's. Jean Champenois, sickened by the collapse of his country, still represented Havas. There were no other resident correspondents, although occasional visitors came. Walter Duranty and Anna Louise Strong, of the post-revolution school of experts, left in the winter before the war. Erskine Caldwell and Margaret Bourke-White came in the spring, and were touring the Caucasus when the war started.

The stumbling-blocks which all the experts encountered were many. Highest of all was the lack of information. What information they possessed came largely from official newspapers, containing an unbelievably small amount of news. *Pravda*, organ of the central committee of the Communist Party, *Izvestia*, organ of the Supreme Soviet, and the lesser newspapers published only stereotyped editorials, following eternally the tone of Stalin's latest utterance on the subject being discussed; cautious stories and articles, containing a minimum of information, and foreign news reports, reproducing precisely the terms of the Associated Press, Reuter's, or whatever service originated the news.

The experts had few, if any, personal contacts, either officially or unofficially, with the people of the country they were trying to judge. The foreign colony of Moscow lived a life apart, behind walls which were invisible but as impregnable as the ramparts of the

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Kremlin. Within those walls came a few Soviet secretaries, cooks and maids, an occasional ballerina or a frequenter of the Hôtel Métropole, but among the great mass of the common people, the experts knew no one.

This was not because of any inhospitality on the part of the Russian people. They were always friendly, to a point of being naïve. It was not because of any anti-foreign feeling. Communists who came from abroad, like the refugees from the Spanish civil war, were adopted freely. It was because of the great gap between the two great classes, labeled by the Soviets as the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It was, literally, a crime for a member of the Soviet proletariat to fraternize with a member of any bourgeoisie, and therefore with the foreign colony.

Even a fleeting glimpse of the physical aspects of the Russian countryside was denied to the experts. Just before the outbreak of the eastern war, the foreign commissariat sent a circular to the embassies and legations, informing them that travel outside Moscow was forbidden except with special permission. And such permission was not forthcoming. The minister of Hungary, soon to become an enemy, was refused a pass to drive a hundred and twenty miles east of Moscow, to Vladimir, to spend a Sunday picnic among the white stone Byzantine churches for which the town is celebrated.

What information they did obtain, the experts submitted to searching — and suspicious — study. They took nothing at face value and mistrusted official

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explanations, so much so that they frequently refused to accept reasonings that, under any other circumstances, would appear perfectly normal. For example, when Marshal Voroshilov was made chief of the defense council of the Sovnarkom, or cabinet, and Marshal Timoshenko was brought in to replace him as defense commissar, the argument raged as to whether Voroshilov had been promoted or 'kicked up stairs.' And the general conclusion was that Voroshilov had been shelved, even though the council he headed controlled the defense commissariat. Yet he was to come back as commander of a front and to remain as third man to Stalin, following only Molotov.

One kind of Soviet information the experts did accept willingly. That was the self-criticism so typical of Russians. If the Soviet press reported a great development in culture of the rubber-bearing plant, Kok Saghyz, that was viewed with skepticism. But if the same newspapers criticized the timber industry for failing to fulfill its plan, that was accepted as fact. The self-abasement, that seemed so strange during the 1937-38 treason trials, was really only a part of the Russian character that had to be understood to understand the country.

So these were the obstacles placed in the way of the experts — and they tripped over almost all of them. Their general consensus was that the war in Russia would last three weeks to three months. They would have been surprised then to know that it would go on to its third year with the Red army still trading blows with the Wehrmacht.



## Bombing of Moscow

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THE WHISTLES blew in Moscow at 10.10 P.M., July 21, 1941. No one paid much attention to them. They had blown six times before — once the morning of that same day — and nothing more had happened. I strolled to my fifth-floor window and watched the west, where the purple glow cast by the setting sun seemed more interesting than the possibility of German planes approaching. A more peaceful sight could not be imagined.

The wail of the sirens faded to a whine and finally to silence. Ten minutes later, there was a new sound — a click of the public loudspeaker system, and then a voice, talking calmly yet gravely, in the streets and squares: 'Citizens, citizenesses, attention! Air-raid alarm!'

There was a tense, expectant hush, as four million persons awaited the unknown. Then, rolling into the city like a mighty wave from the west, came the roar

## BOMBING OF MOSCOW

of the anti-aircraft barrage, and after it the shrill shriek of bombs, the dull grunt of explosions.

Thus, the aerial battle of Moscow was engaged, a great and significant struggle. Its importance, I believe, has been underestimated. The battle of Britain, of course, surpassed it in scope and significance. But here, also, the Luftwaffe set out to demoralize a great capital and to crush a powerful air force. More than eight months were to pass before it conceded defeat.

When the Luftwaffe first flew ahead to bomb Moscow, its running-mate, the Wehrmacht, was having trouble on land. This magnificent military machine, in which the Nazis had ridden blithely over Europe for more than a year, started spluttering and faltering when it reached Russia. It jerked to a halt July 10, facing Pskov, Vitebsk, and Novograd Volynsk, picked up fresh power and pushed on again, in the center of the front, to Smolensk.

The Germans reached Smolensk July 16. On that day, rain clouds gathered over the fast track that a hot summer sun had baked in western Russia. With them, for the Germans, came clouds of gloom. The Germans claimed the fall of the city on the day they reached it. Not until August 13, almost a month later, did the Russians admit that, a few days before, they had abandoned the city. What happened during that period, we in Moscow did not know even a year later. But one thing was certain: the Russians had fought for Smolensk, fought stubbornly and well. They halted the Germans there temporarily. They learned then

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the immense value of a city as a makeshift fortress, even though it meant sacrifice of the city itself. They acquired valuable knowledge of street and house-to-house fighting, even though it meant destruction of the streets and houses. Smolensk became the first in the honor roll of Russian cities which served as battle-grounds — Smolensk, Leningrad, Moscow, Odessa, Sebastopol, Stalingrad — some of them winning victory, some finding defeat, but all of them great in the annals of battle.

It was during that battle that the Luftwaffe flew ahead to Moscow. It did not find the city unprepared. During the first month of war, Moscow had girded for its own battle, in spectacular array. Most apparent was its coat of camouflage. The Kremlin walls were repainted to resemble rows of apartment houses. Lenin's red and black marble mausoleum in Red Square was covered with sandbags and decorated like a country cottage. Mokhovaya Street, between the Kremlin and the United States embassy, was zig-zagged with lines to look like rooftops from the air. The Bolshoi Theater was hung with canvas drapes, painted with false passageways. A net holding green branches was draped over the façade of the Great Palace in the Kremlin. The five red stars, which used to glow nightly from the highest spires of the Kremlin, were concealed under gray cloth. The golden domes of the Kremlin churches were encased in dark coverings, and the bright green roofs of many other major structures were painted in bewildering hues of blue and brown.

## BOMBING OF MOSCOW

Never in wartime Spain or France had I seen anything like it. I did not write about it at the time because the censor would not let me. I would have written, had I been able, because the camouflage could have fooled no one in an air-raid but an over-imbiber struggling home through the black-out from a vodka party. It might have deceived for a moment a frightened German private, trying to make his way through a strange city in street fighting, but it certainly meant nothing to a German bombardier, flying thousands of feet above the city, blinded by the searchlight rays and shell bursts rising from the well of blackness below him. I write about the camouflage now because most of it has worn off or been removed.

Unseen, other more important preparations were made. Moscow lies in the heart of Russia's forest belt. In its dense clusters of pine and birch the greatest number of searchlights ever accumulated around a single point was laid in concentric circles. In the clearings, anti-aircraft batteries were buried in the ground and covered with branches and leaves, ready to rise in defense of the city. In the hollows, silver balloons snuggled, waiting to raise their cables in a steel barrage.

Inside Moscow itself elaborate precautions were taken against air and gas attack. Steel doors and air filters were installed in the subway stations. Timber reinforcement was given to the concrete cellars of large buildings and apartment houses. Signs, 'Bomboubezhishche zdess' (bomb-shelter here), appeared on the streets, with black arrows pointing the way. Each house committee assigned residents to nightly

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rooftop and street watch. Boxes of sand and asbestos gloves were distributed. Posters were put up, demonstrating how to fight incendiaries. They showed a pair of asbestos-covered hands seizing a flaming bomb and dousing it in a barrel of water. This, incidentally, caused quite a controversy with the British air-raid experts who came out from London with advice not to douse the bombs into water, but to spray them with stirrup pumps. Having no stirrup pumps, the Russians went right ahead using water barrels, sand, and anything else they could lay their hands on — with no small success.

The people of Moscow, being human, did not await their first trial under fire and bomb without a tremor. The United States embassy issued notices July 15 for all its nationals to paste on their doors in case of evacuation or accident, declaring the property to be that of an American citizen. My secretary, Sophia Tchijova, who had put her daughter on a train the night before for Michurin, under orders that children should be evacuated to a distance of at least sixty kilometers, saw the notice on my desk, and went to the kitchen to weep quietly with Anna, the Volga German maid. The chauffeur, Pavel, asked for his vacation pay two days later, getting it while the getting was good, and left for two weeks. Finally, Tchijova resigned to join her daughter in the country. Be it said to the credit of both Tchijova, a white-haired gentlewoman, and Pavel, a fine young man, that when the going became really tough, they were both back on the job.

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The foreign colony was having its own tremors. Ambassador Steinhardt sent his first secretary, Charles Dickerson, third secretary, Charles Thayer, and assistant military attaché, Joseph A. Michela, off to Kazan July 17 to set up an emergency embassy. They left by train that night, mournfully singing 'Sweet Adeline.' The British embassy sent its consul-general, John Trant, to Kazan. The Russian wives of two American correspondents, Robert Magidoff and Herman Habicht, received Soviet exit visas and took the trans-Siberian express.

One party of foreigners came the other way. The Yugoslav minister, Gavrilovich, and his attaché, Miletitch, who had been sent away two months before by the Russians, in an effort to appease the Germans, flew back to Moscow from Ankara. These two powerful Serbs, with their solid nerves, their seamy faces, and grizzled graying black hair, were a welcome sight among the Moscow jitterers. Gavrilovich had been given his choice of going to London, to join the Yugoslav cabinet, or of coming back to Moscow, to take his old post. He preferred the latter. A Slav himself, he had grown to know and love Russian, Russia, and Moscow. I drove him around to see his old legation, a house he had never liked because it had once been inhabited by Germans, but he went down cellar to visit his old janitor and maid. They wept with joy at seeing him.

As the first month of war wore on, tension rose, sharpened by occasional air-raid alarms. Then Moscow rose to its test.

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As the bombs were coming down, the first heavy loads of explosives being dumped around railroad stations and other objectives, the later light parcels of incendiaries being scattered along streets and upon houses, the people of Moscow went up to their roofs. That was how they saved their city.

Personally, I should have preferred not to be involved in the saving. My own prescription for surviving air-raids, for what it was worth, had been to make-believe it was all a show, that I was simply a spectator, and to go very busily about my job of collecting and writing news, so busily that I had no time to worry about getting knocked down in the crush. That had worked in Barcelona, where the foreign office was in the hills behind the city, well out of bombing range, and in Paris, where all but one air-raid alerte was a false alarm. It could not work in Moscow.

There was no safe place aboveground in Moscow. The alarm of July 21 was definitely not false. And you could not stand by idly while your friends fought for their lives, their homes, and their city. That night I came to hate the Germans, who I decided were trying to kill me. I declared my own private war on them, and I did what I could against them. It amounted to absolutely nothing, but I tried.

My apartment, on the top floor of a five-story wood and plaster building, started to quiver as the anti-aircraft guns opened fire. When the batteries inside the city let loose, it literally danced. It was not a nice dance. The floor heaved, the walls swayed with a movement something like that of the danse du ventre

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they used to show Paris tourists at the Folies Bergères. But this was a *danse de la mort*. I did not like it. I stood by the window as the first bombs fell near the Kiev railroad station, about a mile away. I went under the beams of the hallway as the incendiaries started to rain. Then I ran down to the ground floor, to the house committee room. My steps were quickened by the shriek of bombs falling near-by and the sight of black columns of smoke, tinged with red, rising like signals of doom.

The people downstairs were very busy, and not very glad to see me. They were in a dark, windowless room just off the entry. The woman on guard at the door opened it a crack at my knock, let me slip in, and slammed it behind me. At first, I could make nothing out of the gloom, but gradually, over the roar of guns and bombs outside, I found they were chattering excitedly — about me! The luminous dial of my wrist watch cast a faint glow which they were demanding that I extinguish. I pulled my sleeve over it, settling that crisis, and stood by the wall.

Although I could see absolutely nothing, I finally made out by the voices that there were no men in the room, only women and children. One woman stood by the wall telephone, calling constantly to near-by house committees, exchanging information on the location of bomb hits and asking whether help were needed. Another door kept opening and closing, as boys went to and from the roof. They all were tense, as I certainly was, but calm and more than usually efficient.

The first wave of bombers passed after half an hour,



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and there was a lull in the battle. Toward midnight the roar went up again, as though the door of a blast furnace had been flung open. The big guns belched, smaller ones popped, machine guns chattered, searchlights stabbed the black sky, red flares flew, and the planes came, scattering incendiaries up and down the streets, like postmen delivering mail. This time, our neighborhood got it.

I was watching from the front door when a ghastly white light whizzed past me and hissed out its existence in the yard. I ducked back into the house committee room, and soon a young boy came in the other door. With him were friends, whacking him on the back and proclaiming him a hero, 'Geroy' in Russian. This was something special, a hero in the house, and for the event the unshaded ceiling light was turned on, an act which carried no danger with it, despite the earlier clamor over my wrist watch, because there were no windows or other apertures through which a ray could escape. The light showed a sixteen-year-old youngster, his blond hair soaking wet with sweat, his red shirt open at the throat, rubbing his elbow-length asbestos gloves. He recited what had happened: it was his turn on the roof when an incendiary landed, and he tossed it into the yard. That was all. But those whose homes were in that house, homes he had saved from fire, thought it was a lot. The women brought him a stool, made him sit down, despite his own objections, and petted him like a world heavyweight championship winner in his corner. Another boy went to take his place on the roof.

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Our hero soon had a rival. Another youngster came in from the adjoining house and said he had tossed four incendiaries from his roof. I began to be skeptical of these stories, and slipped out of the room to see what was happening. The roar was again subsiding. Up in my fifth-floor apartment I found our hero had been right. The incendiary he tossed had made a hit dead-center in my bedroom. Another neighbor had not been so lucky. The two-story wooden house directly behind ours was blazing furiously.

I went down to tell the house committee, and was promptly recruited as a fireman. A young girl of the Thelma Todd type, blonde with a beak nose, but pretty, took me by the hand and said: 'Let's go.' She led me into the yard, and if she had to tug me ahead, it was not because I was reluctant, but only because my knees were shaking. It was not pleasant out there, seeing black smoke billow against the background of a red glare, breathing acrid fumes and feeling no cover overhead against bombs or anti-aircraft shell splinters. I knew enough about air-raids also to realize that the Germans came back over just such fires as this to dump more bombs. But I wobbled along faithfully behind my Thelma Todd, ready to try, at least, to do something. We did not get very far. The regular firemen were already there, laying hoselines through the neighboring yard and starting to pump water into the house. They said something which sounded like the Russian equivalent for 'Scram,' and we went back to the house committee.

From then on, the planes seemed to come in smaller

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groups. The guns would burst into action, there would be a few dull thuds, and then quiet would descend again. Once or twice I went out, hoping the raid had ended, but each time the blast went up once more. As far as I could see, there were smoke and flames. For all I knew, Moscow was in ruins. At last a few gray streaks appeared in the black sky, the drone of planes faded, and at 4 A.M., the same voice which had announced the raid by radio uttered the welcome word 'Otboy' — all clear.

Out in the yard, our neighbors were dragging their belongings from the burned house. The fire appeared to be under control after eating out the roof and upper story. People were swarming into the street to take stock of the damage. Through them, jouncing over the cobblestones of Ostrovsky Pereoulouk, Pavel drove up with my car, and we raced off to the foreign commissariat to do the story.

It was growing light by then, and the streets were as full as though it were midday. To my surprise, away from Ostrovsky Pereoulouk, very little damage was apparent. What had seemed to be a withering raid turned out to have been a light one. Most of the impression of intensity, given by that first raid and subsequent ones, came not from the violence of the bombing, but of the anti-aircraft defenses.

Going down Arbat Street, we passed Foreign Commissar Molotov, driving out of town as though going home from his usual night's work. With the rest of Moscow's four million, he had sat out the raid in the city. Later, I learned that Premier Stalin had his

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own air-raid shelter inside the Kremlin. One swift private elevator carried him down from his second-floor office to the ground, and a second, deep underground, to the shelter. There a steel door shut and the leader was safe. Inside was a green-covered conference table around which he and his Politburo could work despite the raids.

In that first raid I saw, on my way to the foreign commissariat, a bomb had fallen in Mokhavaya Street, midway between the Kremlin and the United States embassy, less than one hundred yards from each. It made a crater, but did no damage. That was the only bomb I could find in the center of the city. Neither the Kremlin nor any other public building showed any evidence of damage.

At 5.30 A.M., the foreign commissariat issued a communiqué. More than two hundred German planes attempted a mass attack on Moscow, it said, but only isolated bombers broke through the defenses, the rest being dispersed, seventeen brought down. Several private houses were set afire and a small number of persons was killed, it acknowledged, but no military objective was reached. 'That attempt,' it said, 'should be considered a failure.'

It certainly was. The Germans tried to burn Moscow, as they did London, but failed.

The Nazis were not easily to be denied their prey. They came back the next night, July 22, at the same time, 10.10 P.M., a hundred and fifty of them, again dropping explosives first, then scattering incendiaries

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aimlessly, but again, at dawn, the sharp spires and bubble-like domes of the ancient city emerged intact from a cloud of black smoke. Their second venture over Moscow cost them fifteen planes.

This one, I sat out in a special, timber-reinforced air-raid shelter in the basement of the foreign commissariat. A Lozovsky press conference had just ended. He displayed documents, captured from the second battalion of the 52d German chemical regiment, showing the Nazis had created special units and issued secret instructions for preparation of gas warfare on a great scale. We had no time to write the story before the raid. Just as we were leaving his office, the whistles blew, and we were shepherded downstairs with the staff of the commissariat. The shelters had evidently been prepared long in advance. Each branch of the commissariat had its own room. Ours was reached by going to the rear of the courtyard, down a flight of stairs and through an anteroom to a large room in which thick logs braced the ceiling under the six-story stone building. It was comfortable there, with easy-chairs, tables, and a telephone. The roar of the barrage and bombs outside came faintly, like the wash of the sea heard at night through closed cottage windows.

Again the third night, they came, twenty minutes earlier, at 9.50 P.M. another hundred and fifty of them. By this time the people of Moscow were used to them, and met them with one of Moscow's most characteristic phenomena — queues. Muscovites were always standing in line, even before the war, for food or drink.

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newspapers or neckties, theater tickets or subway tickets. So common were queues that a story was told of a man who stopped for a moment in the Gorky Park of Culture and Rest to admire a garden. When he looked around, twenty people were standing behind him, waiting their turns patiently. What for, they didn't know, but it was a queue, so they joined it. The queues came from overcrowding of a city in which the demand for almost anything exceeded the supply. The air-raid queues grew from an even more fundamental law of self-preservation. As night approached, the people picked up their bedding, walked to the subway station, waited outside until the whistles blew, then entered and went to sleep. At the height of the raids, seven hundred and fifty thousand persons were sleeping nightly in the Métro stations and tunnels. No one who took shelter there was ever hurt.

On the night of that third raid, I went to the embassy residence, Spaso House, where there was no deep shelter, but the cellar windows had been protected by sandbags, and where I hoped to find someone with a tin of American beer. In that, I was disappointed. The embassy staff was out at the Tarasovka dacha. But Father Leopold Braun, the only American priest in the Soviet Union, and Henry Shapiro, U.P. correspondent, came along; we found couches in the cellar, talked of the savagery of it all for a while in the dark, and then fell asleep. We were awakened sharply by a terrible shock. A white flood of ground glass rolled over Father Braun, who was lying near the window. The house trembled above us.

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For a breathless moment, I watched, aghast, but the walls steadied and stood. We ran upstairs to see if the house had been hit. On the ground floor the curtains hung in ribbons, torn by flying glass which covered the rugs and furniture. Margaret Bourke-White was there, looking shaken but safe. She had been taking pictures from a window of Ambassador Steinhardt's second-floor office when the bomb fell. It hit squarely on the Vakhtangov Theater, a few hundred yards away, demolishing the building and killing several persons.

The Germans were more persistent that night. At dawn, the firing died down, but the alarm was still on. Shapiro and I started to walk home and pick up our cars, to get an early start to the foreign commissariat, when the firing was resumed. We ducked into the cellar of an apartment house. There, the janitor demanded our passports. We did not have them with us. He refused to accept our press cards as a substitute. Instead, he marched us off to a police station, and stood triumphantly over us, like a cat over two mice, while the police questioned us. They telephoned the foreign commissariat to confirm our credentials, and promptly released us with a grin of tolerance. Our cat went away, looking crestfallen, but he could not be blamed: he had been vigilant.

The raids became a siege. Nightly, the Germans came to hammer at the Moscow citadel. They pressed home some heavy blows. A shower of incendiaries reached the capital's wheat-storage center, putting a great grain elevator in flames. So intense was the heat

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that the clothing of the firemen caught fire, but they went forward, the men behind pouring water on those ahead, and finally extinguished the blaze. A railway yard, holding boxcars loaded with bottles of combustible fuel, also was fired, but saved. Here and there, along the streets, the powdered plaster ruins of bombed houses became more and more apparent.

Moscow fought back sturdily. The enemy lost ten to eleven per cent of its attacking planes from the very start of the bombings — a prohibitive price. Night fighters accounted for most of them. Anti-aircraft guns and balloon barrages took the rest.

The people stood the test well. Subway trains stopped running at 10 P.M., and many took refuge there. The rest stayed at home. I spent one night in the Palace of Soviets station, walking there with Philip Jordan, correspondent of the *London News Chronicle*, after a good dinner and a bottle of Château Margaux 1932 at my apartment. I planned to do a descriptive story of the scene, but the combination of the Château Margaux and the long nights of work was too much for me. I fell asleep, perched on a rail, and had to depend on Philip the next day for an account of it. I did remember two endless lines, one on each rail, extending all the way through the tunnels to the next stations. Never had I seen people so patient, so calm, when around them others were fighting and dying.

Most of the nights I spent in the foreign commissariat shelter, since the start of the raids usually coincided with the hour for the nightly military



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communiqué. Palgunov and his crew, Pietr Anurov and Viktor Khozhemiako, the censors, and their secretaries, developed a ritual performance. As the whistles blew, they would troop downstairs and spread out on the chairs and divans at the back of the shelter. Palgunov would blow up a rubber pillow he had brought back from Paris, place it under his kinky head, and then put his staff through literary guessing games. It was strange to doze off, to the accompaniment of a conversation, in Russian, like this:

*Palgunov*: How many short stories did Maupassant write?

*Anurov*: One hundred and three.

*Palgunov*: Wrong.

*Outside*: (guns) brrr, brrr, brrr, bang, bang, bang.

*Palgunov*: Who wrote Gulliver's Travels?

*Khozhemiako* (ironically): Gulliver.

*Palgunov*: Wrong.

*Outside*: (bomb) whz, whz, whz, boom.

*Palgunov*: What was the title of Jack London's story about a sea captain . . .

One memorable night, I spent at the Nemchinovka dacha, out the Mojhaisk highway, to get a glimpse of Moscow's defenses from the west, as the Germans saw them. Ivan Yeaton had made the dacha over into a barracks for the staff of the military attaché's office. We had supper there, and, while waiting for the whistle to blow, listened to little Johnny Alison's stories of flying in other countries. Captain John D. Alison, of Daytona Beach, Florida, who looked like a jockey that night in his roll-neck sweater, was one of Amer-

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ica's finest fighter pilots before the war, had flown in England, came to Russia to show the Soviets how to handle our planes, and then went on to China to become a hero.

Johnny told about an RAF pilot whose face was burned half off when a shell hit the gasoline tank of his Hurricane during the battle of France. Still, he succeeded in parachuting to the ground. As he lay there, snipers started to pot him. They got him, first in an arm, then in a leg. Then they rushed him. 'Good God,' one of them cried. 'We've shot one of our own fellows, an Englishman.'

'No, you haven't,' said the flier. 'I'm a South African.'

They took him to a hospital, but had to evacuate him soon to escape the oncoming Germans. They put him in an ambulance, which bounced so badly he was thrown out of his stretcher, and the man above fell on him. They took him to Dunkerque, and placed him in a ship. It was sunk. Still, somehow, he got back to England — and flew again.

As we sat around the fire, listening, the sound of Moscow's air-raid alarm came to us, like the whistle of a toy train peeping in the distance. We went out to a ridge, under the trees, and watched. It was a magnificent sight, like a small boy's dream of the world's greatest fireworks show.

There had been some skepticism abroad as to whether these defenses were really as strong as they were supposed to be, whether the Germans were really trying to bomb Moscow or just putting on

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nuisance raids. Out there, as Johnny read the skies, I found the answer. It was the real thing. As the shells burst, the fires started and the planes droned over, one after the other, on their run in, Johnny told me he had never seen such a barrage or so many searchlights.

Some technical information about the raids began to be published. Major-General Mikhail Gromadin, commander of the Moscow air-raid defenses, wrote articles, describing them for the people: the first raid was made in four waves, the first numbering seventy planes, the rest forty to forty-five each. Searchlights caught the bombers in their beams, anti-aircraft gunners found the range, and three were brought down over Moscow. The second raid was done in twelve waves of six to eighteen planes each, climbing to an altitude of 18,000 to 22,500 feet, out of respect for the guns, and abandoning the dive-bombing they attempted the first night. From then on, they stayed at a respectful height, only occasionally descending to about six thousand feet when protected by a cloud screen. The Condor Legion, notorious for its operations in Spain, was among the visitors to Moscow. This 53d German air squadron, based on Minsk, was accompanied by the 55th and 26th squadrons, based on Borisov and Bobruisk.

After a week of raids, I had a chance to see for myself the effectiveness of the defenses. Foreign correspondents were taken out to the fresh remains of two German planes, Heinkel 111 and Junkers 88, which were shot down by fighters west of Moscow while attempting daylight reconnaissance flights. We were

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also shown a relay post of the observation service, a complicated sort of telephone station with multi-colored lights flickering on a chart, where lookout reports were assembled, showing the location of enemy planes. Another wrecked Junkers 88 was mounted as a trophy in Sverdlovsk Square. Later, on a trip to the front, I had the displeasure of having a bomb fall a few yards away, but the pleasure of seeing prostrate the plane that dropped that bomb.

The Germans began to come less frequently to Moscow. They were still fairly regular, but not nightly callers. As the summer drew to a close and the front drew nearer to Moscow, there were strange periods of bombs without air-raid alarms and air-raid alarms without bombs. German pilots, flying over the front, could make quick excursions to the capital. On October 14, the night before the foreign colony was evacuated to Kuibyshev, a solitary bomb sank with a thud near my apartment, breaking an absolute silence, early in the evening. About 4 A.M., the sirens announced a raid. That time, the silence remained unbroken.

During the long winter nights, that situation prevailed, with isolated bombs falling by day or night. One broke the façade of the Bolshoi Theater. Another wrecked the main Moscow University building. Another demolished the headquarters of the central committee of the Communist Party. A huge two thousand-pounder fell at the corner of Mokhovaya and Gorky Streets, the heart of Moscow, just outside the National Hotel. The American embassy staff, having lunch in the hotel, heard the thump and

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thought it was a distant explosion. Actually, it was a dud which buried itself twenty-seven feet into the ground. Had it gone off, they never would have finished that or any other lunch. The bomb was dug out and removed by hand, lest any shock set it off and wreck the embassy, next door to the hotel, or the Kremlin, across the street.

But the bombings dwindled steadily. During the spring, the Germans came only occasionally, and then often only to the outskirts. They made their last raid the night of April 5, 1942. Discouraged, they went away, never to return that year. The box-score of the eight months of raids, as drawn up by Vassily Pronin, chairman of the Moscow City Soviet, showed:

Dead.....	1088
Incendiaries dropped.....	35,000-40,000
Explosives dropped.....	200-300
German planes downed.....	1100

Most of the dead — 767 — fell in the first month of bombing. Many more heavy explosive bombs — 1500 to 1700 — fell outside the city. Their bearers never reached their objectives.

A year after the raids started, my neighbors cleared away the weeds which had sprung up in the blackened second-floor timbers of their house, built a new roof, and moved back to their home. For the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, November 7, 1942, the Bolshoi Theater emerged from its scaffolding with a new, gleaming white façade. As a bombless winter set in, the street lights went on once more, glowing faintly but cheerfully in Red Square, along Gorky Street and down the Arbat.

## With the Red Army

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**T**HE Red army, by autumn, 1941, constituted a collection of armies numbering in the sixties. The individual armies were smaller than the American or British, corresponding roughly to what we would call army corps.

The Red army occupied a vast land of its own, set apart from the civilian territory, and extending from the actual front lines back for miles to the points where military control began. That entire area the Russians called 'The Front.'

This land was populated by some five million men, forming the active fighting force. For each man at least two more were waiting to take his place, on the basis of a total mobilization potential of nineteen million men, one tenth of the entire population.

This land was also inhabited by strange birdlike machines called 'Yak,' 'Mig,' and 'Lagg,' by crawling land monsters named 'KV,' and most of all by a fire-

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breathing girl, affectionately known throughout Russia either as 'Katiusha' or as 'Maria Ivanovna.'

It was a land of mystery which few, if any, foreign eyes had ever beheld. So secret was all pertaining to the Red army, before the war, that I knew of a foreign military attaché who tried for months to determine a single fact — the base pay of Red army privates — a fact known to millions of Russians — and he could not find it.

As the war progressed, it gradually stripped the veil from the Red army. The military attaché discovered that the private's base pay was 10.50 rubles a month (officially, two dollars), plus food, tobacco, and clothing, issued to him free, as his own personal property. Dispatches described publicly some of the Red army's operations. Correspondents learned something of its make-up in trips to military establishments and interviews with officers. The more the Germans learned the hard way, tearing out the information at the cost of their lives, the more the Soviet authorities permitted the rest of the world to know of the Red army.

It turned out to be a highly developed machine, not differing in many respects from the regular armies of other great powers, and most amazing for its modernity, efficiency, and strength.

Its infantry was organized in triangular formations, later adopted by the United States, with three smaller units going into the next larger unit, such as three regiments to a division. Each infantryman carried what he called a 'Vintovka,' the Mosin rifle, designed in 1894 and modernized in 1938, of 7.62 millimeters, the same

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caliber as the American army rifle. On this, he carried a 'Shtik,' a triangular-bladed bayonet, balanced so that the rifle could be fired accurately with the bayonet always in place.

The artillery was built around the basic 76-millimeter field gun, slightly larger than the celebrated French '75.' A 45-millimeter gun was also used as a field or anti-tank gun, while a 122-millimeter gun-howitzer, and a 152-millimeter howitzer, hurling an 88-pound shell for eleven miles, did the heavy work.

The tanks, which had been the subject of bizarre legends, making them out to be huge 90-ton monsters, capable of swimming under water or being dropped from the air, proved to be quite conservative, and very effective. The 'KV,' named after Klementy Voroshilov, which was put on display for correspondents, weighed 46 tons. It carried one 76-millimeter gun, three 7.62 millimeter machine guns, and one anti-aircraft machine gun, the light, 7.62 millimeter 'Degtiarov' model. The Red army also had its heavy 'Maxim' machine gun. The 'KV' was powered by a 12-cylinder, 600 horsepower diesel engine, developing a maximum speed of twenty-five miles an hour, and protected by armor capable of resisting a 75-caliber shell, although sometimes pierced by the German 88-millimeter anti-tank gun. The 'KV' had two smaller brothers, a 27-ton 'T-34' and a 6-ton 'T-60.'

The planes were led by the 'YAK,' a light, fast fighter designed by Alexander Yakovlev, and the 'IL,' an armored, low-level 'Sturmovik,' or attack bomber, designed by Sergei Ilyushin. Two other



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fighters, the 'MIG' and the 'LAGG,' older but still serviceable, were in operation, together with a whole fleet of auxiliary craft, ranging from the Douglas, built after the American model, to the U-2, an antique little wood-and-fabric biplane which was still useful for training, communications, observation, and sometimes even for stealthy night glider bombing, at low altitude and with high precision, on crowded battlefields like the one which was to develop at Stalingrad.

Of all these arms, the Red army found itself outdistanced by the Germans only in numbers of tanks and planes, and in both quantity and quality of mortars. The Germans had concentrated on mortars at the expense of their light artillery, while the Russians had neglected mass development of mortars in favor of guns. This error they rapidly repaired. A people's commissariat for mortar manufacture was established, hundreds of factories were turned over to it, and soon, 50, 82, and 122-millimeter mortars took their place in the Red army's armament.

All this, the Germans learned, to their displeasure; and we, to our pleasure.

One mystery we did not solve — the mystery of 'Katiusha.' Her story was one of the most intriguing of the war, the story of a secret weapon, the kind that always catches the imaginations of all peoples.

Katiusha came on the scene at the very start of the war, when stories were whispered, from mouth to ear, of her marvelous prowess: she was the latest and best weapon of the Red army, she cast a death ray, or she belched forth flames, or she hurled multiple-explosives.

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Her effect was so devastating that, wherever she struck, no living thing survived for feet or yards or miles around. So frightening was her aspect that, upon her very appearance, the enemy fled in panic. So secret were her operations that, personally escorted by NKVD men, she drove to the front in a private car, fired three times, and then withdrew so that she should never fall into the hands of the enemy.

This much was certain: Katiusha was a new powerful weapon, built by Andrei Kostikov, a dark, young-looking shrewd military engineer of first rank, made lieutenant-general, chief of a construction bureau. He was named August 18, 1941, a Hero of Socialist Labor, the decoration created in honor of Stalin's sixtieth birthday December 21, 1938, and first conferred on Stalin himself. Kostikov was assisted in his work by Major-General of Artillery Vassily Abarenkov, and two other military engineers, Ivan Gvai and Vladimir Golkovsky. All four shared a hundred-thousand-ruble Stalin award for 1941. The nickname Katiusha came from a love song, popular among millions of Red army men. Red army men who preferred to be respectful invented a more polite form of first and middle names, Maria Ivanovna.

Katiusha remained a mystery throughout the first two years of the war. I came across what seemed to be her tracks several times. Once, I was shown a rocket-gun, and told that was 'little Katiusha.' Another time, a crater was pointed out, and I was told, 'Katiusha did that.' An artillery general told me the Germans feared her so much that they threatened to

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employ poison gas if the Russians continued to use Katiusha; and they warned that no Red army man serving Katiusha would ever be taken alive by the Wehrmacht. The only other information he would give about Katiusha was that she was still in action.

In the second year of the war, I was told that Katiusha had grown a large family, and that now her offspring, big and small, were living all along the front. They worked, I was told, on the mortar principle. By then, the Germans had captured several of them, and had produced their own version of the gun — promptly nicknamed, by the Russians, 'Vaniusha.' Exactly what Katiusha or Vaniusha was, I still did not know.

But in that first summer of the war, Katiusha was only one of the mysteries of the Red army. No foreign observer had yet been to the front. Then, as the Red army shook off the first shocks of the invasion, felt the confidence of its strength flowing back and fought the Germans to a standstill on the central front, we were admitted to its mystic precincts. General Mason MacFarlane, chief of the British military mission, later to become governor-general of Gibraltar, was escorted on a trip to the front near Smolensk late in August. On September 8, the Red army announced its greatest victory to date, the defeat of eight German divisions and the reoccupation of Yelnia, southeast of Smolensk. That news was given to the correspondents in the cellar of the Narkomindel while the anti-aircraft guns outside played their version of the Seventh Symphony. One week later, the correspondents were taken on their first visit to the front and Yelnia.

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At the start I intended to write more about Russians and battles than correspondents and cocktail parties, but in this case all four became so inextricably mixed that it would be impossible to escape the latter. The activities of the correspondents on this occasion, moreover, deserve a place in anyone's history of the war, for it was an historic occasion, the first formal visit ever paid to the Red army by any foreign correspondents, and it was a precedent, establishing the rules for the future trips which gave the world its eyewitness accounts of the war on the eastern front. It was done on the conducted-group system, developed by the Soviet Intourist organization for foreign visitors before the war, and used by the French and British during the first year of war in the west.

The eleven who went were Vernon Bartlett, member of the House of Commons and representative of the British Broadcasting Company; Erskine Caldwell, American author writing for the New York newspaper *PM*; Margaret Bourke-White, Caldwell's wife and photographer for the magazine *Life*; Mrs. J. B. S. Haldane, wife of the British scientist and correspondent of the London *Daily Sketch*; Alexander Werth, special correspondent for Reuter's; Philip Jordan, of the London *News Chronicle*; A. T. Cholerton, of the London *Daily Telegraph*; C. L. Sulzberger, of the New York *Times*; A. T. Steele, of the Chicago *Daily News*; Wallace Carroll, of the United Press, and myself.

We met in front of the Narkomindiel at 8 A.M., September 15, in a bewildering assortment of costumes, including Miss Bourke-White's red coat, Mrs.

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Haldane's brown London fire-warden uniform, Cy Sulzberger's white ski jacket, and Wally Carroll's gray topcoat and tin hat. We were met by a staff colonel, a brigade commissar, and a censor. We climbed into five wiry little M-1 automobiles and were off, down the Mojhaïsk chaussée.

At the start I was interested in studying the organization of transport. This branch of military science, logistics, had always been considered by foreign experts as a weak point of the Red army. To the Russians, who named transport the 'brother of the Red army,' there was no such question. From all I could observe, trains and trucks, particularly the latter, were moving as fast as any humans could move them across these great, sparsely inhabited, scantily tracked spaces.

A red-and-white striped barrier, like a horizontal barber pole, marked the entry to the military zone at Nemchinovka, just outside Moscow, on the Mojhaïsk chaussée. There military passes were examined, the barrier was raised and the bearers were permitted to enter. Beyond that point, military traffic police, waving red flags for stop and yellow for go, directed movements from their stands in the middle of the road. At the sides were signs, showing speed limits of forty kilometers an hour for day traffic, fifteen kilometers by night.

Particularly impressive was the number of signs indicating places where machines could turn off the highway, under tight ceilings of pine and birch branches, to rest or to hide during air-raids. Every

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advantage of the dense forests had been taken to conceal traffic from enemy observation.

Truck columns of as many as thirty machines at a time, some of them Fords, were rolling steadily to and from the front.

On the highway, too, I formed my first impression of the Red army man on duty. It was a silhouette, against a mournful, gray autumn sky, of a husky figure, wrapped from head to foot in a waterproof cape, and carrying a rifle from which protruded the long, wicked-looking bayonet. All along the road they stood thus, vigilantly on guard.

We drove that morning to Viazma, a typical behind-the-lines town, bustling with the military life added to its peacetime activities. Situated in a pleasant valley, Viazma, celebrated for its making of gingerbread, was at that time a base for the Red air force, as it was to become later for the Luftwaffe.

We could see examples of the marksmanship, or lack of it, in German bombings out there, where they were meeting the full opposition of the Red air force. A towering warehouse and a conspicuous bridge had been the objectives of four raids, an officer told us, but they still stood intact. The fields around them were pitted with craters, the nearest more than a hundred yards away from the targets.

At nightfall, we bumped across the fields to an expanse of land, which seemed to be just another empty space, studded like any other with clusters of shrubs, but which turned out to be an airdrome. Just being covered with branches, and hardly to be distinguished

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in the darkness, was a squadron of ten planes which had just bombed the Smolensk airport. The officer in command, Major-General Georgy Zakharov, a burly young man in fleece-lined flying suit and blue-banded cap, showed us around his field.

The planes were long, low-winged, water-cooled fighter-bombers, carrying four racks for bombs of twenty-five to fifty kilograms under each wing, a cannon and several machine guns. One of them, already nestling under pine boughs, had a gaping hole directly through the red star in its right wing, evidently the result of enemy aircraft fire.

The pilots, still bundled in their flying suits, came out to tell us about their raid. Like any group of boys, meeting visitors, they talked all at the same time, then all bashfully became silent, and had to be prompted, one by one, to tell their stories: Ten of them had gone over . . . they went in at a thousand feet . . . they met no opposition until after they dropped their bombs . . . they saw twelve or fifteen fires on the enemy airport . . . a building which they had been told served as quarters for Nazi officers was wrecked . . . they all returned safely.

We asked who had flown the damaged plane, and a tall, dark, serious young man, Lieutenant Alexei Rodin, nineteen, stepped forward reluctantly. How did it happen, we asked, pointing out the shell-hole in his wing.

'Oh, that!' he said, and shrugged his shoulders.

Finally, he admitted his plane had been hit by an anti-aircraft shell at nine thousand feet after dropping

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the bomb-load. 'It gave me a pretty good shaking,' he said; 'I had a little trouble getting back, but it's okay.'

Are you ready to go back and bomb again? he was asked.

'Of course,' he said.

By then, complete darkness had fallen, and in the gloom we were given an unusual demonstration. One plane was trundled out of its hiding-place, taxied into a clump of trees, and faced across the field. An order was shouted, and it fired four times. Its shells screamed past us, and burst, making what seemed to me to be a later double blast and leaving two sparkling flares. We were so startled by the exhibition that everyone had a different version of it.

'The Germans are afraid of that,' General Zakharov commented laconically. We wanted to know more about it, what it was and how it worked. He would only say that it was a new weapon, used both against planes and tanks and aimed so that it exploded on both sides of its objective. Later, I was told, that was the 'little Katiusha.' If it was, that was the nearest I ever came to solving her mystery.

We drove away under a velvety black sky, studded with stars, to the International Hotel, Viazma. We were soon to regret that beautiful clear sky, and even that bombing of Smolensk. But that evening, we had other business, for Major-General Vassily Sokolovsky, then forty-three years old, and chief of staff of the western front, was waiting to talk to us at the hotel.

General Sokolovsky was the type of soldier of whom little was heard, but who was highly important behind



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the scenes. He served as chief of staff first to Marshal Timoshenko, and then to General Zhukov, working constantly, tirelessly, efficiently, at the sides of the great leaders, learning thoroughly the problems of the front on which he acted as a sort of permanent executive and discharging competently a tremendous amount of routine. Tall, dark, square-jawed, clean-shaven, dark hair parted on the left, he looked like the kind of man who, in America or England, would be a rising captain of industry or a progressive young president of a bank. Here, he was a leading officer in the service of the state, like many we were to see, carrying out responsible tasks with energy and efficiency. \*

Long after this trip, I learned that at the time we were on the front, Marshal Timoshenko had already gone to the southwest. His transfer was announced only a month later, during the battle of Moscow, but it had nothing to do with the Russian setbacks early in that battle.

Sitting around the dining-room table, on which cups of tea and platters of sandwiches had been stacked, we heard General Sokolovsky outline quietly and simply, the situation on his front.

'The Blitzkrieg, in essence, has been converted to blitz destruction of German men and material,' he said. 'The Blitzkrieg failed in the sense that something has developed now like a continuous grinding of men and material, closely resembling the battle of Verdun, only ten or one hundred times greater than that, because the means of destruction in our hands are so much greater.'

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'A number of figures can be quoted,' he said, producing from a briefcase a sheaf of papers, like an American businessman about to present convincing statistics for a customer. His figures showed that since the start of the battle of Smolensk, the Germans lost on this front 1950 planes, destroyed in aerial battles, by anti-aircraft guns, and on airdromes; on one army front, from September 1 to 10, they lost 22,500 dead and wounded; on another army front, from September 1 to 7, they lost 20,000 dead and wounded; and on a three-army front, from September 1 to 10, they were pushed back ten to fifty kilometers at various points in the Yartsevo sector.

'That,' the general said, 'is evidence of how quickly the enemy is being exhausted.'

He advanced four reasons for the failure of the Blitzkrieg and stabilization of the western front: the will of the Russians to fight, increased production of arms, the weak rear of the Germans, and the loss by many Nazis of faith in the invincibility of their own army.

'On a large part of the front, the Germans are already digging in,' he said. 'For hundreds, almost thousands of kilometers, they are now on the defensive. What lies ahead of them is trench warfare, mud, Russian roads, and winter.'

The Germans did have one more offensive spurt left on that front, which they were to start two weeks later against Moscow, but which was doomed to failure. After that, for more than a year to come, they were to stay, dug in their holes on that front, as

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Sokolovsky predicted. The accuracy of his estimate of the situation, at the time he spoke, we were permitted to see on the very front lines.

About midnight that night, after talking awhile longer, the general packed up his notes and nodded to his aide. They pressed their way through the admiring throng of waiters and maids who had gathered in the doorway and went back to their headquarters. We stood in line to wash under the single faucet at the end of the second floor of the International Hotel, and climbed into iron cots, three in a room. We were awakened at 7.30 A.M. the next morning by the next act in the aerial drama that began the night before with the bombing of the Smolensk airport.

The Viazma air-raid sirens whined, the anti-aircraft guns set up their roar, there came the drone of planes, and then, suddenly, the shriek of falling bombs. One fell directly across the street from the hotel, blasting in our windows. A shower of glass sprayed across my bed. In a single movement I went out of that bed, back across the room, and under another bed by the door. Cholerton and Carroll were already there. We waited, breathless, for the next bomb in that string. It never came. Instead, there came the song of fighters, rising to meet the enemy. The drone of planes faded into the distance. We could breathe again.

'Come see this,' someone shouted. 'Anurov has been framed.'

We ran down the hall to the censor's room, and found him lying ruefully in bed, a wooden window frame lying across his ankles and chest. Once he was

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disengaged, we discovered that the frame and glass had done him no more damage than a few bruises.

'Look at this,' someone else shouted. 'The house across the street has been hit.'

We looked out to see a few forlorn folks digging into the wreckage of a thatched cottage, bringing out a body. Margaret Bourke-White bustled out to photograph those poor people in their moment of mourning. The rest of us tottered shakily to breakfast. There, we were told, nine planes had come, apparently in reprisal for the Smolensk bombing, and killed at least four and wounded nine persons.

Later, we saw the rest of that drama, one of the many small cycles which make up a war. Driving out of town, we saw, prostrate in a field, the wreckage of a Junkers 88, one of the planes which had bombed us. And finally, we met three of the four men who had flown that bomber. The fourth was too badly wounded to talk to us. The three stolid youths said they were ordered to bomb Viazma airport. They were brought down by five or six Soviet fighters which overtook them and crippled their engines. The cycle was complete.

Out of Viazma and past our personal bomber, we turned off the Mojhaïsk chaussée on the muddy road to Yartsevo, a village which no longer existed as such, but only as a heap of ruins on a tactically important spot which had been recaptured July 27 and was still held as an advanced point by the Red army. Through a forest, we drove up to a divisional headquarters, three miles from the German lines, and forty miles

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northeast of Smolensk. As we entered a clump of woods there, we could hear the artillery thumping in the distance.

It was definitely a joyful sound, that bump of the big guns, not from any sadistic thought that they were killing men, but from the comforting feeling that those guns were killing Germans who might otherwise kill me in Moscow, my wife and daughter, Constance, in Dedham, Massachusetts, my mother, father, and brother in Westwood, Massachusetts, my sister in Chicago, Illinois. And it was exhilarating to know that those thumping guns were Russian guns, not only holding the enemy, which was an achievement at that time, but turning him back in bewilderment.

From this point on, for an account of the rest of that day the reader must excuse me if I am a bit vague, for this is where the cocktail-party angle of the story is introduced. I remember walking through a troop-populated wood to a dugout, where I was introduced to Lieutenant-Colonel Kirilov, commander of the division. I remember walking into a great, magic tent where Sasha, the fourteen-year-old mascot of the division, did honors at the door, a soldier played an entry march on a piano, and girls were heaping food and drink on long board tables: all that within sound of the big guns on the front.

From there on I remember very little. We sat down, with Colonel Kirilov and Nikolai Suslov, his political commissar (an office which was later to be abolished), at the head of the table, and with the correspondents along the sides, interspersed with junior officers.

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Erskine Caldwell sat opposite me, beside an enthusiastic captain who was determined to engage in a duel of 'do adna,' meaning 'in one,' or 'bottoms up,' with vodka as the weapon and a visitor as his opponent. This, it seemed, was a time-honored tradition, and the guest challenged was honor-bound to meet every pass of his challenger. Caldwell skillfully turned his captain's attention to me, and I became the correspondents' champion for the day. Afterward, I was told, I was carried out of the tent, while the captain, standing at the door, saluted his valiant though defeated opponent — and then passed out in his turn. This is possibly an exaggeration in my case, and probably in the case of the captain, but in any case, when I next became clear about the progress of that historic trip to the front, I was lying in a comfortable cot in a school-house, many miles back of the front.

My colleagues informed me that, after that lunch, I slept quietly in my car, while the others went out to see the command post of an artillery battery, the headquarters of an artillery brigade, and a dugout for troops, two miles from the German lines. If that was true, I am sure they have written it for posterity.

While others assumed the rôle of champions for the rest of the trip, I can complete my account of it more clearly.

We drove the next day to another divisional headquarters, this one only two miles from the German lines in the Dukhovschina sector, and were met by Colonel Mikhail Dodonov, commander of this Siberian unit. Again, we were seated promptly to lunch, this time

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not in a tent, but in an open clearing in the woods. This must seem very mild, going to the front and promptly sitting down to lunch. In fact, it was very mild. It was precisely this mildness that was impressive. So secure was the Russian position that in both cases the colonel in command could spread a meal for us, almost within sight of the enemy.

Again the big guns thudded, to an accompaniment of the chatter of machine guns and the occasional crack of a rifle. While we were eating, a German reconnaissance plane flew directly overhead, through brisk anti-aircraft fire. I wondered what the German intelligence service would make of aerial photographs of that scene of civilians munching their meal in the woods, as though on a picnic.

After lunch, we coaxed Colonel Dodonov, a big, quiet man, into telling us something about his unit.

'Well,' he said, 'this is a Siberian division. From the stories of prisoners, we gather that we are regarded as wild men. But actually, we are civilized men, not at all wild.'

The silent sentries, the girls serving at tables, with white robes over their khaki uniforms and black boots, gave supporting evidence to his testimony.

'To fight the Germans, you've got to know their weak points, and when you know them, you can beat them,' said Dodonov. 'They're bad at fighting at night, actually frightened at night, especially in the woods, although, strictly between us, they have some successes at night, too.'

(That 'strictly between us,' I am sure, no longer

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applies, now that the war is years older and Dodonov has become a general.)

'The peculiarity of this division,' he continued, 'is that we decided to fight the Germans at night. As a result of three night battles, the Germans have retreated fourteen kilometers, leaving much of their equipment and many prisoners.

'This division,' he said proudly, 'knows no retreat. It has moved only forward.

'Now, the Germans are scared as hell of our patrols and night action. They do a lot of shooting, just to make a noise. They fire thousands of rockets, turning night into day, so they can see around them. We're glad to have them make this light for us.'

At nightfall we had a chance to confirm for ourselves the colonel's words. We trotted across a field, seven hundred yards from the enemy lines, to a battery of 76-millimeter guns, established in a forest, and watched as they sent their shells rushing across the fields to explode in the German positions. The enemy did not reply with explosives. But as we drove back from the front that night, their star shells illuminated no-man's-land, searchlights played intermittently, flashes rose and fell in the starlit sky. They were strictly on the defensive.

We slept that night in a medical dressing station, a heated tent with straw spread on the floor and iron cots ranged along the walls, while the artillery sang its deep, hoarse lullaby. In the morning, we found a pouring rain had reduced the dirt road to a terrible bog of oozing black mud. We set out, nevertheless, for



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Yelnia, greatest objective yet taken by the Red army and final objective of our trip, seventy-five miles from our tent. Through water-filled bomb and shell craters, under drenched pine trees, and across soggy fields, we slogged all that day. We slept that night in a pine forest outside Dorogobuzh and drove on the next day to Yelnia.

On the battlefield, we traced the first major Russian victory of the war, a victory which ejected the Germans, for the first time on any front, from any considerable amount of territory. A brigade commissar, who had taken part in the action, explained it to us.

It began at Ushakovo, a village six miles north of Yelnia, which formed part of the German left flank on that sector and against which the Red army launched its offensive. All that remained of Ushakovo was a blackened jungle of fallen beams. Through it ran a weaving line of German-dug trenches, ten feet deep, without timber supports or floor boards, and a series of outposts, shaped like swastikas, where the Germans had stationed their machine guns. Up to this system ran another trench line, the Russian, approaching the German in a T-shape, which served as a springboard for the Red army attack.

A bayonet assault, which left a litter of German refuse in the trenches, had carried the heights dominating Ushakovo and forced the Germans to withdraw along the road to Yelnia. At Ustinovo, a mile south of Ushakovo, an immense German observation and command post, excavated in the side of a hill, had been evacuated. Then the Red army had closed in on

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all sides, forcing the enemy to abandon Yelnia. Their own tactics of encirclement and extermination had been turned against the Nazis for the first time, tactics which they were to face again in the battles of Moscow and Stalingrad.

The graveyard of Yelnia itself, which the Germans fired before they left, was lined with the skeletons of burned houses, standing like lonely sentinels along the ravaged streets. Around the city the fields were torn by tank treads, slashed by anti-tank ditches, and strewn with shattered cottages.

The devastation was far greater than anything I had seen after the war in the west. There, after the fall of Paris, I found the battle had passed swiftly and lightly over most places, punching only a few holes in a village here, wrecking a crossroads there. Around Yelnia, all was consumed in a frightful, all-devastating struggle between two giants, fighting savagely to the death.

From Yelnia we turned back through Viazma to Moscow. The first stories were written under the dateline, 'With the Red Army.' And two weeks later, after a political intermission for the three-power supply conference, the greatest battle of the year, the battle of Moscow, began along that same front.

## Caviar Conference

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A CONFERENCE, by common conception before the war, was a formal meeting for discussion, usually of a dispute. The Moscow conference of 1941 departed completely from the old formula. There was no dispute. The parties were agreed in advance that the United States and Great Britain should give, and the Soviet Union should receive, aid against Germany. There was hardly any discussion, only two meetings and a few committee sessions. Even a fundamental law of nature itself was reversed, in that the givers gave gladly, the receivers received none too eagerly.

If there was a single issue which ruffled the otherwise smooth surface of this historic conference, it was that of caviar for Churchill — not supplies for Stalin.

My first inkling of the impending conference came the morning of July 30, when a friend telephoned to ask:

‘Do you know where Garrigopkins is?’

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My ear, which had been tuned for days to Voroshilov, Timoshenko, and Budenny, did not catch the name immediately. Then, I got it.

'Harry Hopkins, you mean?' I asked. 'The last I saw, by the Russian papers, he was in London.'

The Russian habit of converting our 'H' into a 'G' the nearest letter to it in their alphabet, was always causing puzzles. They talked of Gitler, Gimm-ler, and Gess. Now it was Garry Gopkins. Soon, it would be Averell Garriman.

'Harry Hopkins, if you like,' said the voice, 'but he's not in London. He's in Moscow.'

I gulped my surprise and my thanks together, hung up, and then put through another call in a hurry to the Narkomindiel where Robert Magidoff was working on the papers. He typed out a sentence, 'Harry Hopkins flying representative Roosevelt director lease lend program arrived unheralded Moscow,' the censor stamped it, Pavel ran it down to the telegraph office, and we were out with the news. I went to investigate the situation.

It was true Hopkins was in town, I was told, but nothing should be said about it. Why not, since the censor had already signed the story? Oh, all right, he would see the correspondents anyway in a few hours. Of such ephemeral things were beats made in Moscow.

He did see us that evening, at the embassy residence, Spaso House, at 8 P.M. He looked pale and tired, with one thin leg dangling over the other as he slumped in his chair. He talked faintly, his voice dwindling away at times to an inaudible mumble. But what he

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said was amazing. He had been in Moscow only a few hours, but he had already done business with Stalin. He was just back from the Kremlin, and he was ready to talk with us. There was a fine man as a representative for the President — and for the correspondents!

He told us he informed Stalin of President Roosevelt's admiration of the fight Russia was putting up against Germany, and of the United States' intention to aid Russia with both immediate and long-term delivery of supplies. He received from Stalin an expression of thanks and an assurance that America's confidence would not be misplaced. They discussed in detail the arms, munitions, and materials which America could provide.

The next day he saw Stalin again, at the unseasonably early Kremlin hour of 6 P.M., and immediately afterward he saw us again at Spaso House. This time the generalities had been disposed of and the two men had talked of more specific and more secret matters. 'I have nothing to add to what I said the other day, other than that my short visit here has given me even more confidence that Hitler is going to lose,' he told us.

The third day, August 1, he flew back to London after dispatching his business with record speed for Moscow. His visit formed the first episode in the long, drama-filled story of Allied aid to Russia. It was followed by the three-power supply conference.

American Ambassador Steinhardt and British Ambassador Sir Stafford Cripps called jointly on Stalin August 15, bringing messages from President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, proposing that a

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conference be convoked soon in Moscow to decide on 'distribution of raw materials and arms.' They went to the Kremlin at 6 P.M., the very hour at which Hopkins had twice called, and handed Stalin identical copies of the joint personal message, each copy signed by both the President and the Prime Minister. Stalin dictated his reply immediately, and handed copies to the ambassadors. The reply, of course, was an acceptance. Stalin had been placed in the unusual position of being invited to be host in his own home to guests bearing gifts.

The guests flew in to Moscow Sunday, September 28 — Averell Harriman heading the Americans, Lord Beaverbrook the British. An anti-aircraft battery took a few pot shots at them en route, but otherwise they were given a friendly reception. The Red army, navy, and air force, the foreign commissariat, in the person of First Vice-Commissar Andrei Vyshinsky, and the staffs of the American and British embassies welcomed them at the airport. The flags of the three nations flew from the masts, a military band played the three national anthems, and a guard of honor marched in review. The delegates drove to their respective embassy residences.

The correspondents were called to Spaso House that afternoon to meet the Harriman mission. We were a pretty tired and jaded lot, just back from our first trip to the front, worn out by our day-and-night routine of communiqués and air raids, and perhaps not very interested in the details of a conference, the conclusion of which was foregone. At any rate, we caused Har-

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riman to comment, 'You're the meekest bunch of correspondents I ever met.' We had the pleasure later of hearing Cy Sulzberger, of the *New York Times*, tell him at the concluding press conference, 'You're the meekest bunch of delegates we ever met.' In the meantime, we had the refreshing surprise of learning that Quentin Reynolds, of *Collier's*, a great reporter, but slightly on the weak side as a diplomat, was press attaché for the conference.

That same evening, Ambassadors Steinhardt and Cripps took the chief delegates, Harriman and Lord Beaverbrook, to the Kremlin to meet Stalin. Molotov was present, as head of the Soviet delegation to the conference, and Litvinov turned up as a delegate and interpreter.

The conference opened Monday, September 29, at the Spiridonovka Palace, official residence of the foreign commissariat, with its first and next to last full session. It was a closed meeting, at which committees were named to carry out the work of the conference. Reynolds and Vernon Bartlett, member of Parliament, correspondent for the *London News Chronicle*, and commentator for the British Broadcasting Corporation, went into a huddle over a typewriter and came up with a communiqué that bore evidences more of journalistic zeal than of diplomatic finesse. It said:

The formal opening of the Three-Power Moscow Conference took place this morning under the presidency of Molotov. In his opening address he paid high tribute to Lord Beaverbrook and to Mr. Averell Harriman.

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'I hope,' he said, 'that the conference will be guided by the high ideals expressed by President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill on August 15. I would suggest that today we appoint six committees — army, navy, aviation, transport, raw materials, and medical supplies. Time is precious. Let us get to work.'

Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Harriman were equally brief in their speeches of reply. The red tape and long speeches usually associated with diplomatic conferences were entirely absent. After expressing the good wishes of his government, Lord Beaverbrook referred to American aid.

'We owe a great debt to our American friends,' he said. 'Our present advantageous position on the battlefield is due in large measure to them. Today we are in partnership with the Russians. We are here today to show that we are ready to make every sacrifice to help conquer our common enemy. M. Molotov has said that time is precious. He is right. We will give lessons to those who make war. We will do everything we can to bring the conqueror low.'

Mr. Harriman, whose speech was translated by Mr. Litvinov, was characteristically brief. He said that the mission which he headed had been sent by the President of the United States and that it was an historic occasion because America was in the status of a non-belligerent.

'But we come with your ally, the British,' he said, 'with the same object — to give you every assistance against the violent and uncalled-for attack upon you by Hitler and his cohorts. Your success means everything to the people of America. I am instructed to pledge you the very fullest possible support today, tomorrow, and as long as the struggle lasts and until the ultimate victory comes. Now let us get to work.'

Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Harriman appointed members of their missions to the six committees and



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the proceedings, which lasted only half an hour, concluded. The committees immediately went into session. Both Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Harriman told their committee members to work day and night and to have full reports of Russian needs ready by Friday morning.

The Reynolds-Bartlett report concluded by naming the Russians present, and adding that the American and British ambassadors were there 'throughout the session.'

For two days, the committees met, and the leaders of the delegations conferred with Stalin nightly. Suddenly, a bombshell — or, perhaps more aptly, a fish-ball — was tossed into the midst of the deliberations. It left a regrettable odor of caviar.

Philip Jordan, of the *News Chronicle*, whose dispatches were also going to the *London Times* and Lord Beaverbrook's own newspaper, the *Daily Express*, picked up from somewhere a report that his lordship had sent a man out to buy twenty-five pounds' sterling worth of caviar, to be brought back to Prime Minister Churchill. That amounted to about a hundred dollars' worth, a lot of caviar. Philip sent a little story about it. The Prime Minister read it, and sent a little telegram to Lord Beaverbrook.

Lord Beaverbrook immediately dropped his conference work like a hot fishcake, if the simile may be continued, and summoned Philip. The conversation went something like this:

*Beaverbrook:* Did you send that story about my buying caviar?

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*Jordan:* Yes, sir.

*Beaverbrook* (louder): Why did you send it?

*Jordan:* Because it is the kind of story your paper likes.

*Beaverbrook* (loudest): Who told you about it?

*Jordan:* As a newspaperman, can you ask me to violate the unwritten law of our profession and betray the confidence of my source?

The conversation ended there. Lord Beaverbrook stormed into the British embassy, accusing some younger officials of having been the cause of a leakage of information. None could remember having spoken of it publicly. The controversy went on for days: Who let the caviar out of the can? The riddle was never solved.

In all fairness, it must be said that there was some justice on all sides. The Prime Minister was right, in that he had ordered no caviar, and a story of millions of fish eggs being purchased abroad for him hardly made good reading for his own people, who were lucky if they had one hen's egg a day. Lord Beaverbrook was right, in that the amount of caviar appeared to have been greatly exaggerated, and that, in any case, it was a personal matter, and a man must have some privacy. Philip Jordan was right, in that it was an interesting news story, which he obtained with no strings attached, and which he was therefore professionally bound to send. If anyone was wrong, it was the person who let out the story. Who that villain was Philip never said, no one else ever knew.

Another culinary crisis threatened when Cy Sulz-

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berger learned that Lord Beaverbrook breakfasted on hot pancakes and maple syrup with Ambassador Steinhardt at Spaso House, expressed his delight over that delicacy, and received another portion at his hotel the next morning, hot from the American embassy, with another can of syrup. That one, however, failed to cause the reaction that the caviar had produced. Gradually, attention turned away from food, back to supplies for Russia.

The conference met again for its second and final full session Wednesday — two days ahead of schedule — in another closed meeting. Messrs. Reynolds and Bartlett got together to concoct another communiqué, confronted this time with the task of making it agree with the Russian text. They produced a document that was a jewel of its kind. As it was handed to me, it read thus:

The conference of the representatives of three great powers — the U.S.S.R., Great Britain, and the United States of America, which was opened in Moscow on September the 29th has completed its work on the 1st of October.

The conference was held on the basis of the joint message addressed by Mr. Roosevelt, the President of the U.S.A., and Mr. Churchill, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, to the President of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. Stalin, and, in accordance with the agreement as expressed by him, had the purpose, as it is put in the mentioned message, to solve the question as to 'the best way of rendering assistance to the Soviet Union in the excellent resistance which it is putting up against the Fascist aggression,' as well as the questions 'concerning the dis-

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tribution of common resources,' and 'concerning the best utilization of these resources for the purpose of rendering the greatest contribution to their efforts.'

The delegations of the three powers, headed by Lord Beaverbrook, Mr. Harriman, and V. M. Molotov, have carried out their labor in the atmosphere of perfect mutual understanding, confidence, and goodwill. They were animated by the importance of their task to render support to the heroical struggle of the people of the Soviet Union against the piratic Hitlerite Germany, upon the successful struggle against which depends the cause of regaining the liberty and independence to the nations enslaved by the Fascist hordes. They were inspired by the eminence of the cause of delivering other nations from the Nazi threat of enclavement [sic].

The conference, an active part in which took J. V. Stalin, has successfully accomplished its work, passed important resolutions in conformity with the aims set for it, and manifested the perfect unanimity and close cooperation of the three great powers in their common efforts to gain the victory over the mortal enemy of all freedom-loving nations.

Finally, the temporary press attachés produced a joint statement by Lord Beaverbrook and Harriman, asserting:

The members of the conference were directed to examine requirements from the United States and Great Britain necessary to the supply of the Soviet Union, fighting to defeat the Axis Powers.

It has now been decided to place at the disposal of the Soviet government practically every requirement for which the Soviet military and civil authorities have asked. The Soviet government has supplied to Great Britain and to the United States large quantities of raw materials urgently required in those countries.

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Transportation facilities have been fully examined and plans have been made to increase the volume of traffic in all directions.

M. Stalin has authorized Mr. Harriman and Lord Beaverbrook to say that he expresses his thanks to the United States and to Great Britain for their bountiful supplies of raw materials, machine tools, and munitions of war. The assistance has been generous and Soviet forces will be enabled forthwith to strengthen their relentless defense and to develop vigorous attacks upon the invading armies.

Mr. Harriman and Lord Beaverbrook, speaking on behalf of the United States of America and Great Britain, acknowledged the ample supplies of Russian raw materials from the Soviet government, which will greatly add to the output of their own weapons of war.

The concluding paragraph showed signs of particular attention:

In concluding its session the conference adheres to the resolution of the three governments that, after the final annihilation of Nazi tyranny, a peace will be established which will enable the world to live in security in its own territory in conditions free from fear or need.

The correspondents received the communiqués at 5 P.M. at the foreign commissariat. As we waited three hours for the censor to pass our stories, we had a sort of guessing game: which two of the four freedoms proclaimed in the Atlantic Charter were omitted from the Moscow statement. The correct answer was: speech and religion.

If I have appeared harsh on Quent Reynolds and Vernon Bartlett in their rôles as press attachés, let me add that they stayed on, after the conference, as

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correspondents, and were the best of friends and colleagues.

Four Douglas passenger planes took the delegates north October 3, and that polar night the diplomats went aboard the British destroyer *Harrier* in the White Sea. The destroyer, bobbing like a bottle in the wild waves, brought them out to the cruiser *London*, bashing against the greater warship as she came alongside. At first, a derrick and tray were proposed to transfer the men to the cruiser. A gangplank, however, was finally put out, and Admiral Standley, still a sprightly sailor at seventy, was the first to cross, hopping nimbly aboard the cruiser. Lord Beaverbrook, a confirmed landlubber, went across the gangplank tied to a rope, in case he fell. The entire delegations were transferred, and the ships parted, the *London's* loudspeaker calling dramatically into the night:

'Well done, *Harrier*, well done.'

Behind them the delegates left a protocol in English and Russian, fixing the amount of supplies which the United States and Great Britain engaged themselves to make available to the Soviet Union for nine months, from October 1, 1941, to July 1, 1942. When that period ended, I was informed, Britain had placed on her docks every promised item. The United States had lagged somewhat, after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and America entered the war (an act which promised to be of more eventual aid to Russia than any amount of supplies which could be sent), but even so, most of the slack was taken up.

After the original protocol expired, a new master

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agreement was signed in Washington. For the first year of formal application of the aid-to-Russia plan, Allied supplies consigned to the northern sea route were announced in London to have been:

Aircraft.....	3,052
Tanks.....	4,048
Motor vehicles.....	30,031
Gasoline.....	42,000 tons
Fuel oil.....	66,000 tons
General cargo.....	830,000 tons

Nineteen convoys delivered these goods to Russia, starting with four or five freighters, escorted by a few small warships, ending with mighty caravans of forty to forty-five vessels, protected by miniature fleets, including aircraft carriers. The first convoys reached their destinations unmolested. In the summer of 1942, the Germans, alarmed by the flow of supplies, put on a concerted campaign to stop it. Torpedo-planes dived down day after day at the freighters, submarines dogged their trail, surface craft came out to encounter them, but still, the seamen of America, Britain, and Russia delivered the goods.

Up to January 1, 1943, it was announced from Washington, the United States sent to the Soviet Union, over all routes:

Aircraft.....	almost 2600
Tanks.....	more than 3200
Vehicles.....	about 81,000

The United Kingdom added to that flow more than 2000 planes and 2600 tanks.

An important point about these figures was that

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they applied, not to actual deliveries in the Soviet Union, but to material sent on its way to the Soviet Union, just as the original agreement was made in terms, not of deliveries, but of equipment made available to the Soviet authorities for shipment from the United States and England. Some of it was lost on the way, after a slow start, but shipments increased steadily in 1942 and early 1943.

Deep inside the Soviet Union, their effect began to be felt. I saw Airacobra, Kittyhawk, Tomahawk, and Hurricane fighters in service at an airport outside Moscow. I saw American medium and light M-3 tanks, Mathildas, and Valentines, being turned over to the Red army brigades behind the front. I rode in jeeps at an artillery camp. I saw a Cossack unit using American field telephones in maneuvers. I ate American lump sugar at a Red army mess, and saw American lard on kitchen shelves in Moscow.

As could be expected in any undertaking of this amplitude and complexity, difficulties arose. The tricycle landing gear of the Airacobras snapped sometimes on the rough Russian airports. The M-3's riveted body proved more vulnerable than the welded mass of Russian tanks, its treads too thin for some Russian terrain. The jeep scooped a coat of mud through its uncovered bottom into the motor. For much of the mechanical equipment, more spare parts, tools, and Russian-language instruction books were needed.

When the second-front issue became acute, there were even complaints about the amount of Allied aid being delivered. I heard a prominent Soviet publicist



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assert that America and Britain were giving Russia less support than Hungary was giving Germany, that they were delivering fewer goods than Saratov, an average Russian industrial city on the Volga, was producing. What Russia really wanted, more than supplies for the Red army, was a well-equipped Allied army, fighting in the field, cutting off the awful German pressure at its source.

When the Caviar Conference was meeting, an important American participant told me he could not understand the casual way in which the Soviet delegates received Allied offers of supplies. When the Russians finally saw that they could expect both supplies in the east and relief from the west, that was another matter.

The conference itself had a strange, little publicized but highly significant aftermath. It resulted in bringing up for the first time in frank discussion between the Soviet Union and other United Nations the delicate subject of post-war aims. It was the Soviet Union which took the initiative in opening the discussion.

The story, as it was being told in hush-hush tones in the diplomatic corps, was this:

Stalin, in one of his nightly meetings with Lord Beaverbrook and Harriman during the conference, asked Beaverbrook for an outline of British plans for the peace. Beaverbrook, intent on other matters, brushed the question aside with the remark that he would advise Stalin later on this subject, and promptly forgot it. But Stalin did not forget.

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Some time after the conference, Stalin questioned Cripps on the same subject. The ambassador, not having been informed of the previous conversation, could only reply that he would consult his government and Beaverbrook. He sent a telegram to London about it, and was informed that a memorandum from Harri-man, covering the subject, would be forwarded to him. But that took time.

Stalin, in the meantime, began to get the impression that the British were avoiding the issue, and a chill settled over Soviet-British relations.

It was to remedy this situation, reassure Stalin as to British intentions, and start at last discussions of the post-war world that Anthony Eden, foreign secretary and heir-apparent to Prime Minister Churchill, came to Moscow in December, 1941.

His coming constituted one of the most important steps of the war. The Soviet Union, in effect, had been forced into the war on the side of the United Nations by Germany. Whether the family of allied nations would remain united, after the war, depended largely on conversations such as this. Eden made a good beginning.

The communiqué which concluded his talks with Stalin and Molotov was characteristically optimistic:

The conversations, which took place in a friendly atmosphere, showed the identity of views of both parties on all questions relating to the conduct of the war, and especially with regard to the necessity for the utter defeat of Hitlerite Germany and the adoption thereafter of measures to render completely impossible

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any repetition of German aggression in future. The exchange of views on questions relating to the post-war organization of peace and security provided much important and useful material, which will facilitate a further elaboration of concrete proposals on this subject.

Both parties are convinced that the Moscow conversations constitute a new and important forward step toward closer collaboration between the Soviet Union and Great Britain.

I saw Eden in his room at the Hotel National after the conversations, and he was as optimistic as the communiqué. It was late in the afternoon, for he had been sleeping off the effects of another one of those late Kremlin banquets which traditionally close such meetings. But he appeared fresh and bright. Here, he was not the Eden of the black Homburg hat and rolled umbrella, but a rough-and-ready Eden in high brown fleece-lined boots, a brown sweater and black suit, with a white handkerchief sagging from the breast pocket. But he still wore his familiar, rather boyish smile.

He said he had devoted a 'considerable amount of time' to the subjects of 'peace and the post-war period,' and that he felt the talks had been 'pretty useful,' especially since they constituted the first direct exchange of views on these matters between Stalin and a member of the British government. Both sides, he said, had explained their attitudes toward the problems involved.

He was, quite obviously, pleased with the results.

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and there was strong reason to believe Stalin, too, was pleased.

No agreement of any kind was reached during these talks, as none had been intended to be reached. Eden and Stalin, however, had talked very concretely and specifically of the post-war aims of their governments. What Stalin wanted, Eden would and could not disclose. Later, I was given to understand, Stalin had expressed no ambitions for any part of Iran or the Turkish Straits, but had made clear the Soviet Union's intention to keep what it held in June, 1941, meaning the three Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, and the Soviet-incorporated territories formerly belonging to Finland, Poland, and Rumania. The Soviet plans, I understood, 'dovetailed not too badly' with the British, as set forth by Eden.

From Moscow, Eden returned to London to report to the British cabinet and consult the Dominions and other united nations. There, evidently, all did not go so well. In any case, it was not the kind of business that could be done quickly. More than a year later, in February, 1943, Eden was to set out for Washington on the same mission that had taken him to Moscow. But events were moving much more rapidly on the Russian front. There, the great crisis was at hand.

## Ticket to Kuibyshev

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OCTOBER 2, 1941, seemed at the time to be just another day in the life of Moscow; a day of war, to be sure, but hardly a day of destiny. We in Moscow did not know then that on that day started a tremendous, portentous struggle which was to decide the fate certainly of Moscow, probably of the Soviet Union, and perhaps of the world.

For the Muscovites, the day's big news was of battles at the two distant ends of the front, on the Baltic and Black Seas. Leningrad was buckling down for the terrible siege it was still to be enduring two winters later. Already, that fall, the Germans were camped on the approaches to the city and shelling some quarters. Odessa also was under siege, soon to fall, but only after exacting terrible toll of its Rumanian assailants. In the Ukraine, where Kiev had fallen, the enemy had pushed on past Poltava, across the Dnieper and close

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to Crimea. Grave the news was, but not immediately concerned with the life of a Muscovite.

For the correspondents, the day's work involved a press conference given by Lord Beaverbrook and Averell Harriman at the Hotel National after the close of the three-power supply conference. There was some talk of the New York Yankees having beaten the Brooklyn Dodgers in the first game of their world series. 'I am disappointed,' Harriman, a Dodger fan, permitted himself to be quoted. There was more talk of the supply conference having been completed successfully. 'The Russians are very pleased with Lord Beaverbrook,' Lord Beaverbrook, a Beaverbrook fan, permitted himself to be quoted.

The supply protocol was signed at six o'clock that evening at the Kremlin by Molotov, Harriman, and Lord Beaverbrook. The military communiqué, issued at midnight that night at the foreign commissariat, reported stubborn fighting on the entire front.

It was only five days later, on October 7, that we realized the battle of Moscow had been engaged. That, incidentally, was often the time lag between the actual occurrence of events on the front and their publication in Moscow, another factor that fooled the Germans. Hitler took several occasions to refer scornfully to the 'miserable information service of the Russians.' Actually, those who counted were very well informed. Persons who talked with Stalin on subjects ranging from British aircraft types to Pacific Ocean operations told me they were amazed by his complete, up-to-date knowledge of their subjects. But, just as the

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United States knew very well its losses at Pearl Harbor and announced them only a year later, so the Soviet Union knew very well what was going on at the front and gave out its version usually only three to five days later. It was a policy that bore healthy fruit in keeping information from the enemy, and it did the people at home no harm.

After five days of the German offensive against Moscow, we learned from the *Krasnaya Zvezda*, the Red army newspaper, that hard fighting was under way on the central front, that the Germans had lost more than one thousand dead, one hundred and ninety-eight tanks destroyed, and thirty-one planes brought down on three sectors, and that the Russians were counter-attacking against wedges driven into their lines. Lozovsky told us at his afternoon press conference that the offensive was on. 'Probably the Germans have several hundred thousand men they want to lose,' he said. 'They'll achieve their aim.'

They did achieve that, and only that aim, but for the next two months the fate of Moscow hung in delicate balance.

That same night the danger became apparent from the communiqué reporting battles in the Viazma and Briansk sectors, one hundred and thirty and two hundred and twenty miles southwest of Moscow. The Germans had broken through there. They were racing to beat the winter to Moscow. Already a sharp wind was whipping light snow into their faces, goading them on ever faster. By now, they had accumulated greatly superior numbers on many sectors. The next night,

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October 8, the Red army was announced to have evacuated Orel, two hundred and forty miles south of Moscow. Moscow grew tense.

Every newspaperman who witnesses a momentous occasion of this kind tries to think of the one phrase which tells the full, thrilling story in a few words, the 'lead' to his dispatch. While I was watching the Germans occupy Paris, I was tormented for days by such a search, even though I could send nothing. The best I could do was: 'Paris fell like a lady.' Now, the best I could find was: 'Moscow stood up and fought like a man.' The people were warned, even urged, to 'realize the gravity of the situation, the greatness of the danger.' *Pravda* reminded them of Lenin's words in October, 1919, when the Whites approached Lenin-grad, captured Orel, and marched on Tula and Moscow: 'The situation is extraordinarily grave, but we are not in despair, because we know that each time a difficult situation is created for the Soviet Republic, the workers will perform miracles of bravery, inspiring the troops by their example and leading on to new victories.' Little more than a year before, I had heard the leader of another state, Paul Reynaud, talking of 'miracles,' if such were needed, which would save his nation. His miracles failed to materialize. But this was not France. The Soviet Union made its own miracles.

Tense, Moscow was, but not panicky. On the same day that the fall of Orel was announced, the Dynamo soccer team beat Spartak, 7 to 1, in a national league game. The last of twenty-three buildings to be moved



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on Gorky Street was pushed back fifty yards, completing the widening of that thoroughfare from the center of Moscow to the White Russia railroad station. As I walked up my darkened staircase that night after work, I passed a neighbor, whistling nonchalantly as he descended to take his dog for a walk. Moscow's nerves were steady.

By October 10, the news was that the western Red armies had escaped encirclement, closed the path to the Germans north from Orel toward Moscow, and withdrawn to new positions in the Briansk sector. But that afternoon, the American embassy issued navy first-aid kits to the correspondents, offered us anti-tetanus and typhus injections, and promised us one hundred liters of gasoline each for our cars in case a quick evacuation became necessary. That evening, the weather grew clear and cold. There had been no bombings since the start of the offensive. Now, an ominous rumor spread that the Germans had dropped leaflets, warning that Moscow would be destroyed over the coming weekend.

I went to the National for dinner that Friday night with Quent Reynolds, Tommy Thompson, Cy Sulzberger, and Philip Jordan, a magnificent meal of Blinies, caviar, soup, roast beef, mashed potatoes, carrots, chocolate pudding, and coffee, with libations of vodka, red wine, champagne, cognac, and whiskey. Never had the slogan of the American colony in Moscow been truer: 'I'm feeling no pain!' As I walked up the hill to the foreign commissariat for the midnight communiqué, a gorgeous moon was riding high in the

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black sky, framed by three silver anti-aircraft barrage balloons. Let those Germans come!

The next day, October 11, Ivar Lunde, the secretary of the Norwegian legation, who had returned from Teheran, gave a luncheon at his new house off Gorky Street, and that evening, Ambassador Steinhardt had a poker game at Spaso House. Colonel Kent C. Lambert came in by train October 12 from the Far East to serve as American military observer. Still, that Sunday, the Germans didn't come.

The worst news they could produce the night of October 12 was the fall of Briansk. That was hardly the destruction of Moscow. Briansk had been a battleground for a week. It was more than two hundred miles from Moscow. That left plenty of breathing space.

Monday, the thirteenth, came up a brittle, cold, clear day, illumined by a pale, early-winter sun, and with it came the German bombers. The Nemchinovka dacha, where I had spent Sunday night, danced to the tune of the anti-aircraft guns. Theodore, the house man, said he heard the bombs whistle near-by. But driving in the Mojhaïsk chaussée, we saw no signs of damage, and in Moscow we found there had been no alarm. They had apparently gone for a suburb.

The Mojhaïsk road was by far the most important and interesting highway in the world that Monday morning, the main artery of life for the Red army defending Moscow. Its four broad asphalt lanes were crammed with supply trucks and civilian traffic, moving easily and steadily, showing no signs of a jam back

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from the end out there where troops were fighting. Across the fields a battalion was marching out in long gray coats and fur hats, and artillery was being placed.

In Moscow, the atmosphere of tension had increased. Pedestrians swarmed the streets, as buses and taxis were commandeered to carry troops. Queues were longer than ever, especially for bread. 'Black snow' was falling from the chimneys of public buildings, charred bits of documents which were being burned. Another rumor spread that Communist Party leaders had held an important meeting, made important decisions. These Moscow rumors were not like Balkan babbling or Paris café gossip, but grapevine news, usually reliable. This rumor was true. Later, I learned that on that very day the Moscow committee of the Communist Party appealed for recruiting of special workers' divisions which played a major part in the defeat of the Germans.

Tuesday, the snow began again, falling in damp, sodden lumps and spreading a coat of slush on the streets. My mail that morning consisted of a large engraved card from the Afghan ambassador, inviting me to tea the next day at 3.30 P.M., on the occasion of the birthday of His Majesty the King of Afghanistan. That tea was never poured. The foreign colony's hours in Moscow were running short.

As I walked to the foreign commissariat for the morning's news, women wrapped in shawls, and men with necks drawn into their fur collars, were hurrying and slipping on the sidewalks. A squad of twenty-five Red army men marched by in formation. They were

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on their way to a bathhouse, armed with nothing more lethal than towels. At the press department there was a great to-do over one of the girl secretaries who had gone to the front and returned in full uniform. The other girls and the censors were gathered around her excitedly. The news was not bad. Red army counter-attacks had thrown the Germans back as much as ten miles at some points in the Viazma sector. But elsewhere the Germans maintained their numerical superiority in troops and tanks, and continued to advance. Lozovsky told us that afternoon, 'The Germans will never capture Moscow.'

That afternoon was a weird one to me, my next to the last in Moscow during the battle of Moscow, one of jumbled recollections of censors marching out of the foreign commissariat with gas masks hung over their shoulders for military drill... of businessmen in shiny black suits and caps practicing bayonet charges in the Alexandrov Park under the Kremlin wall... of a woman, wearing a thick quilted jacket, being bumped by a bus on Kuznetsky Most, bouncing to her feet and proceeding busily on her way...

It was my next to the last afternoon of the battle of Moscow, for the next morning, Wednesday, October 15, as I was writing my dispatch at the foreign commissariat, the embassy telephoned to summon all American correspondents. I finished my story of German attacks on Kalinin, one hundred miles northwest of Moscow, of battles in the Viazma, Briansk, and Orel sectors, and walked through the slush to Spaso House. Ambassador Steinhardt was waiting

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for us anxiously under the crystal chandelier of his drawing room. He and Sir Stafford Cripps had been to see Molotov at 12.45 P.M. They were notified that the foreign colony must leave Moscow that evening. We were to be back at Spaso House at 5.30 P.M., with only as much baggage as we could carry. Incidentally, the invitations for the Afghan ambassador's reception at 3.30 P.M. were canceled.

We had our tickets for Kuibyshev.

I trudged wearily back to the foreign commissariat to pick up my typewriter. But first, there was a message to be sent. The A.P. had requested an article on Lenin's tomb. 'Tomb closed,' I typed. Then I shut my machine. With it, I thought, I was closing an epoch.

My last view of the battle of Moscow was a cavalryman on a tawny little horse, drawing up before a policeman at the corner of Gorky Street and Kuznetsky Most, and leaning over to speak. My fevered mind conjured up the picture of him asking the way to the front. 'Right down the Mojhaïsk chaussée,' I felt like crying, 'and not very far...'

It was a meek collection of men from many nations, awed by the momentousness of the occasion, humbled by their own smallness amid tremendous events, yet impressed by the calm, efficient, slow but thorough-going way in which they were handled, that went through the evacuation of Moscow. Not since Kutuzov evacuated Moscow in 1812, to escape Napoleon, had this happened. Even now, although we did not know it, there was a difference, not a parallel, between

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this and the Napoleonic war. For Stalin stayed to fight and defeat Hitler.

Thirty-two Americans assembled that evening at Spaso House, diplomats, soldiers, correspondents, and a single private businessman, Colonel William A. Wood, armaments expert who had been engaged as an adviser to the Soviet war industries. We stacked our bags in the front hall, sprawled around on the fragile, gilded Empire chairs and divans in the elegant white-and-gold drawing room, talked in hushed tones, and waited for the signal to move. Ambassador Steinhardt, who had been criticized for planning evacuation too soon, was at his best, now that his preparations were proving valuable.

A buffet supper was spread on the dining-room table, a last supper that followed Mrs. Steinhardt's pre-war menus — cold cuts of meat, hot spaghetti, baked beans, salad, cake, and coffee. The Chinese boys, Chin and Yang, padded around in their white coats, serving drinks. Moscow was toasted in farewell, as the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, and Christmas has so often been toasted.

Toward the middle of the evening, a telephone call came. It was time to leave. Dutifully, we trooped out of the embassy, stacked our bags into trucks, climbed into cars, and drove to the Kazan railroad station. There, in the restaurant, were gathered Americans and British, Japanese and Chinese, Swedes, Norwegians, Poles, Czechs, Yugoslavs, Bulgarians, Turks, Persians, and Afghans. A dark little stranger arrived, the Greek minister who had reached Moscow

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only the previous day. All sat around the bare, zinc-topped tables and waited patiently.

Mercifully, the snow was falling again heavily. Had the Heinkels come over that night and dropped a single bomb on the dome of the Kazan railroad station, they would have wiped out the Moscow foreign colony.

I went out once to say good-bye to Pavel and advise him to leave by road the next morning, with the caravan of embassy cars, for Gorky, and then to take a boat down the Volga to Kuibyshev. The halls of the station were jammed with civilians, waiting their turns to leave. They were packed so closely that one of my shoe rubbers was torn off in the crush, and I had to go straight down, like a cigarette in a fresh, tight package, to retrieve it. When I oozed my way back to the restaurant, the movement to the train had started.

On the darkened platform each party was directed to its car. The Americans had two cars, a 'soft,' meaning upholstered seats, and a 'hard,' meaning bare wooden benches. I turned off, with Quent Reynolds, Cy Sulzberger, and Robert Magidoff, into a hard compartment. It was after midnight. I climbed on an upper bench, put my duffel bag under my head, pulled my coat over my ears, and fell asleep.

I did not wonder whether Moscow would or would not fall; nor whether the war would or would not end. I simply collapsed. A prisoner must have the same reaction when he is taken by the enemy. I did not care. The toil and tension I had been going through for four months had ended, the war itself seemed to have ended, as far as I was concerned, and I fell asleep.

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The next morning I awoke to find the train stopped in a station, and two young American fliers washing in the snow under my window. Life, even after evacuation, must go on, and I found life was not at its best in a Russian hard car, easily the hardest object ever devised by man.

We unkinked the stiff bones which seemed to be aching somewhere deep inside our frozen carcasses, and teetered back to the soft car. The seats were really soft there. Moreover, the air was warm. Most of all, we detected Alice-Leone Moats, *Collier's* colleague of Reynolds, in the act of occupying alone a four-place compartment. Uninvited, Quent, Cy, and I barged in and occupied the three other places. La Moats, a rare mixture of tender-hearted woman and hard-baked girl reporter, as nice a person as anyone ever took out to dinner or worked with on a story, uttered not a protest. La Moats loved company, and she had a lot of it on that trip. Too much, she was heard to complain later, in reference to the snoring of three worn-out young men, but at the time she never once complained.

I appropriated the upper bunk opposite La Moats, and made it my home for the next four days and four nights. On rare occasions I sallied forth to splash my face in the snow or to dig into one of the cans that Charley Thayer, third secretary of the embassy, kept opening at his end of the car. Sometimes I looked over the side at the poker games which Quent and Cy organized daily in their lower bunks. But most of the time I simply slept.



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On the fifth morning, October 20, after exactly a hundred and four hours of travel to cover less than seven hundred miles, we rolled past troop trains, box-cars full of refugees, and flatcars loaded with migrant machinery, into the sunlit station of Kuibyshev. In-tourist automobiles met us, as though we had just returned home after a pleasure trip, and took the diplomats off to their new embassies and legations, the correspondents to the Grand Hotel.

Cy Sulzberger and I tossed our bags on the seedy carpet of third-floor, left, room Number 35, sat on the sagging springs of the two beds, and looked across the naked little table at each other. Moscow, when we left, had been the center of the world. Kuibyshev, now, seemed the end of the world.

Back there at the heart of the earth, I was neither surprised nor unsurprised to learn, Stalin still sat in his Kremlin. He had just declared martial law in Moscow and made known that Army General G. K. Zhukov was commander of the western front. But the battle of Moscow was no longer ours. Ours was life in Kuibyshev.

It started all over again, the usual round of dispatches, communiqués, and press conferences, but this time it was in the drabness of a small-town hotel instead of at home, it was in the primness of a school-house instead of the foreign commissariat, and it was in the dullness of the province instead of the capital, the objective of the battle.

Lozovsky resumed his press conferences October 23 with the most interesting statement he was ever to

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make — that Marshals Voroshilov and Budenny had been recalled to organize new reserve armies while Marshal Timoshenko went to the southwestern front and General Zhukov took command in the west. But that was not enough to appease a crowd of indignant correspondents, who had said nothing while they were being evacuated from Moscow, but now beat their breasts in anguish, protested their readiness to die rather than leave the capital, and demanded their immediate return. For days afterward, Lozovsky was officially 'sick,' suffering from 'malaria,' a word the Russians use to describe anything from a light cold to pneumonia, and, although he was seen out walking in his peaked cap and short coat, he was much too ill to hold any more conferences.

Kuibyshev became a complete little reserve for foreigners. The diplomats had each other on whom to pay their calls; two vice-commissars to whom to deliver their notes, and the Bolshoi Ballet to which to make their pilgrimages. The correspondents had their newspapers. All was organized perfectly, so that everything the foreigners had been unto each other in Moscow, they could be in Kuibyshev; but that everything they had been to the Russians, or the Russians to them, was broken by an invisible wall that surrounded them deep inside the Soviet Union.

If any proof had been needed of the excellence of Soviet organization, I found it in learning that the pleasant little houses to which the diplomats were assigned had been emptied and cleaned in preparation for them the previous July, less than a month after

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the war started. The Gastronome food store for foreigners moved from Gorky Street, Moscow, to Kuibyshev Street, Kuibyshev, and the commission store on Stolesnikov Street, Moscow, where the foreigners had shopped for antiques and souvenirs, turned up opposite the Grand Hotel, Kuibyshev. It was perfect in its way, but so small, so lifeless, that I conceived a passionate hatred for Kuibyshev.

I tried to break out of it. Ilya Ehrenburg, the *Krasnaya Zvezda* correspondent, took pity on me and brought me out with him to see one of the transplanted factories, an aviation parts plant which had wandered away from its home in Kiev, halfway across Russia, to settle on the site of a seventeenth-century wagon-wheel foundry. It was a magnificent spectacle, this of modern machinery clanging where once the mournful chant of the Volga boatmen, tugging their barges, had sounded; of city dwellers making a new life for themselves in the country, perhaps never to leave; of a nation, working on despite every reverse, confident of eventual victory. Again he took me out to a collective farm, a collection of one hundred and twenty wooden houses at the end of a frozen road through a forest. Here was a strange spectacle, of a 'dictatorship of women' holding the most important posts while the men fought at the front; of refugees from cities of Bessarabia teaching the peasants by night of metropolitan life, and of peasants teaching the city dwellers by day of work in the fields. Several times I went to military hospitals to talk to the wounded. But all this was not my job. My job was back in Moscow.

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A month after our arrival in Kuibyshev, Thanksgiving day, November 20, the embassy promised turkey and all the fixings. I took a brisk walk from the hotel, along Kuibyshev Street and up Nekrasovskaya Street, trying to stir up an appetite. It was a gorgeous day, with a pale sun shedding a sort of baby-blue light over the fresh-fallen snow, and there was a marvelous meal, complete down to the cranberry sauce and candied sweet potatoes. But I did not enjoy them. Afterward, there was a poker game. I won a couple of hundred rubles, and pocketed them listlessly. That night I walked back to the hotel and found that Eddy Gilmore, who had left London forty days before to work with me, had finally arrived with Walter Kerr of the New York *Herald Tribune*, Larry Lesueur of the Columbia Broadcasting System, and Ralph Parker of the New York and London *Times*. Eddy promptly took most of the work on his big, capable shoulders.

Without realizing it, I undertook the experiment of determining how a human would live during winter on the Volga if he left his organism an entirely free rein. The answer was that he would rise daily at 4 P.M., read the papers, have lunch at 6 P.M., take a walk, have dinner at 9 P.M., read, write, or play poker, and go to bed at 4 A.M. When I succeeded sometimes in struggling out of bed at noon, there was something invigorating, like early-morning air, in the atmosphere, and the sun sparkled on the snow, heaped five feet high in the streets, and on the ice, stratified like layers of rock on the sidewalks. The weather grew cold, forty degrees below zero centigrade, a figure that

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meant no more to me than a billion would in dollars. The sun shone far away in a clear sky, but the air itself seemed to freeze, holding me in a huge, immovable block.

On the evening of Sunday, December 7, the black-out was lifted and the street lights were turned on in Kuibyshev. That same evening the lights went out in Singapore. And that night a friend called from Tass to say a dispatch had just been received: 'Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor.' Just as the lighting had changed from the Pacific to Russia, so the big story seemed to have gone from Russia to the Pacific.

Kuibyshev became all the more unbearable, because now our nearest neighbors were also our worst enemies, the Japs, and only then did I realize what obnoxious creatures they were. Arch Steele, who had come from the Far East for the *Chicago Daily News*, had often told us of the disgusting noises Japs customarily made in the process of eating. I had the misfortune of finding that, no matter how bad those noises might be, the Japs made even worse ones in washing. Invariably, when I got up and proceeded to the community washroom, there would be at least one, and usually several, Japs standing before the wash-bowls, gargling, retching, coughing and spitting. From then on, their noises pursued me throughout the day, the mumblings in their rooms, the squawking of their loudspeakers, the shouting outside their doors. By evening, they became drunk, occupied the table at the head of the dining room and caroused there for hours, monopolizing the place. Only late at night did

## TICKET TO KUIBYSHEV

their noise subside, only to begin again the next day in the washroom. It had always been like that, but only now did it seem intolerable, because we were not doing so well in the Pacific.

There was one glorious occasion when a Boxer dog, belonging to the Fighting French mission, took an instinctive dislike to one of the Jap correspondents and chased him through the hotel lobby, failing only by the width of a bowl of rice to catch him before the Jap reached his room and slammed the door. There was another occasion when several of us obtained as weapons some two-foot cardboard figures of Santa Claus, being put up in the hotel for the coming Christmas and New Year celebrations, and set out to quiet the noise at the head table, only to be persuaded by the management that it would not be proper. And there was a time, late one night, when Hatanaka, one of the Jap correspondents with whom I had exchanged information in peacetime, called me by telephone, hissing obsequiously, obviously drunk and obviously anxious to impart some news. On my best behavior, I suggested, in the coldest tone I could manage, that he call again, after we had beaten his country, and hung up on him. Immediately, I regretted that I had not listened to him first and hung up on him afterward. Often, I wondered what it was he wanted to say. I still hope that, after he is beaten, he calls me again. I'd like to know what that news was.

But Kuibyshev, which had been bad enough before, became worse now, with the noises of the Japs coming closer, and the big story apparently going farther away

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from us. We did not know that, at the very moment the Japs attacked Pearl Harbor, the Red army was pressing a counter-offensive from Moscow, was winning its greatest victory to date, and that Russia would not yield its place as the major front. A week later, we were back in Moscow. The Red army had not only saved Moscow from the Germans. It had also saved the correspondents from Kuibyshev.

A year later, the diplomats were still in Kuibyshev, settling down cozily for their second winter there. By then, one of the most important and popular subjects of their discussions was the death of Joe, the Airedale that Sir Stafford Cripps had left behind him. Sir Stafford, being a vegetarian, had fed Joe only vegetables. Sir Stafford's successor, Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, being a healthy Scot, had fed him meat. And Joe died. When I was last there, the diplomats were still debating this case as an argument for the vegetarians. Clark Kerr and Admiral Standley, who replaced Steinhardt as American ambassador, were free by then to spend most of their time actively in Moscow. And we were free to go back to the war.

## Battle of Moscow

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THE BATTLE of Moscow was won by as smart and successful a trick play as has ever been sprung on an unsuspecting opponent. It was won as well by sheer strength, courage, and sacrifice. Winter, silent white ally of the Russian, helped. But the most surprising, and perhaps the most important factor, was contributed by the Red army's tactics.

During the battle, even when Moscow appeared to be shuddering on the precipice beneath which lay the black abyss of German occupation, I heard that thousands of horsemen were hiding in forest camps, still waiting their moment to fall on the enemy. After the battle a Red army officer told me: 'We could have stopped them earlier, but we waited until it would cost us less — and cost them more.' It was only a year later, on the first anniversary of the victory, that exhibitions and articles on the battle told the full



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story, or, at least, as full a story as was possible of a war still in progress.

It was an astounding tale of the Germans, counting each Red army division as it fell, smashing what seemed to be the last Russian reserves which immolated themselves in battle, and marching blind with confidence to the very gates of Moscow, only to find themselves outmanned, outmaneuvered, and defeated.

Before the battle the front ran straight from north to south, through the Yartsevo sector, roughly three hundred and fifty miles west of Moscow. It was stabilized there during the summer battle of Smolensk. The rains came in September, soaking the dense pine and birch forests, spreading bogs in the turgid earth, washing out the dirt roads, and making mass movements impossible. Then came the autumn, freezing a firm, fast track again for Blitzkrieg. That was the situation when the Germans started their first general offensive against Moscow October 2, 1941.

A powerful force of German armies had been aimed at Moscow from the very start of the war. This 'central group of armies,' commanded by Field Marshal von Bock, included the fourth and ninth regular armies of Generals Kluge and Strauss, and the second and third tank armies of Generals Guderian and Goot, later to be joined by the fourth tank army of General Hepner from the Leningrad front.

The striking force, seventeen infantry divisions, two motorized infantry divisions, about a thousand tanks and nine hundred aircraft, was concentrated

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against Viazma, in the center of the front. The general plan was to drive northeast from Smolensk toward Kalinin, outflanking Moscow from the north; southeast toward Orel and Tula, outflanking Moscow from the south; and east through Viazma, taking Moscow by frontal assault. The date fixed for the fall of the capital was October 16.

The plan provided for swift overwhelming of the Russian front-line forces, encirclement of the principal group of Red armies of the western front, and a sharp break-through to Moscow. Only the first part of this plan was executed.

The German armies, by weight of numbers and machines, smashed the Russian first line, broke into the open and raced more than two hundred miles northeast to Kalinin, east through Viazma and southeast toward Tula. The sharpest advance was made in the center, where they reached the Viazma sector within a week and occupied the city in ten days. They reached the Kalinin region October 14, the Tula region, October 29. They were rolling fast, recklessly, sending out individual tanks with small groups of motorcyclists or cavalrymen to scout, then flinging columns of tanks, with companies or battalions of motorized infantry, into spurting advances.

Suddenly the Red army's resistance stiffened on the flanks. Kalinin fell, but in the forests behind the upper Volga fresh Russian armies converged on the German spearhead, stopped it in the suburbs of Kalinin. Tula refused to fall. The German center, receiving no support from the flanks, dared not advance alone on

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Moscow. Thus, in mid-October, ended the first general offensive.

The Germans now held a great bulge around Kalinin, northwest of Moscow, and a lesser salient to the southwest, below Mojhaïsk. They spent the last days of October and the first of November straightening their lines. They filled in their upper fold north of Rzhev and their lower bend from Volokolamsk west of Narofominsk. They drove twice at Tula, starting November 6 from the northwest and November 11 from the south. There they were repulsed. Their line formed an arc roughly one hundred miles north, west, and south of Moscow. That was the setting for their second general offensive.

They drew up, this time, thirteen tank, thirty-three infantry, and five motorized infantry divisions. Their plan was to take Moscow by encirclement, rather than by frontal assault. Snow was falling, the thermometer was dropping, the winter campaign, on which the Germans had not counted, was starting. There was need to hurry, for the Germans, but this time, there must be no mistake, for a mistake would mean disaster.

The third and fourth tank armies, composed of the 1st, 2d, 5th, 6th, 7th, 10th, and 11th tank divisions, 36th and 14th motorized infantry divisions, and 23d, 106th, and 35th infantry divisions, were assigned to the Russian right flank. They were ordered to march through Klin, Solnechnogorsk, Rogachev, Yakhroma, and Dimitrov on Moscow.

The second tank army, composed of the 3d, 4th,

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17th, and 18th tank divisions, 10th and 29th motorized infantry divisions, and 167th infantry division, was given the Russian left flank. Its orders were to go through Tula, Kashira, Riazan, and Kolomna to Moscow.

In the center were placed the 9th, 7th, 20th, 12th, 13th, and 43d army corps, the 19th and 20th tank divisions. This force, mainly infantry, was to make holding attacks, tying up the western Red armies to prevent their lashing out against the salients on their flanks, and then, as the tank encirclement of Moscow progressed, push through Zvenigorod and Naro-fominsk to Moscow.

On paper, it was a superlative plan, perfectly plotted and amply powered. But Stalin, in his Kremlin, had another plan.

The Red army command, either from direct information or from deduction, seemed to have known or to have figured out the second German offensive in advance. Stalin's plan to meet it provided for concentration in depth of reserves both before Moscow and outside the ring of encirclement, strong defense along fortified lines to drain enemy strength, and finally a powerful, perfectly timed counter-offensive to defeat the enemy.

Moscow, meanwhile, had been declared in a state of siege October 19, the capital had been emptied of industries, commissariats, and civilians not essential for its defense, and General Zhukov was announced to be in command of the western front — a post he had already been holding throughout the battle — while

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Marshal Timoshenko went to bolster the sagging southwestern front.

The people of Moscow were called upon to play a major part in the drama of life or death of their city. The Moscow district committee of the Communist Party met October 13, with party leaders of all Moscow organizations, and decided to organize special Communist forces. Each district was assigned a quota. Enlistment began the next day. The men appeared, carrying their own food and warm clothes, having already taken farewell of their families, and went immediately to their barracks. Most of them were members of the Communist Party or of the Communist Youth Movement. They formed the 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th Moscow Communist divisions.

Thousands of women, mobilized by their house committees and still wearing their city clothes, went by train, bus, and truck into the mud, slush, and cold west of Moscow, there to dig tremendous trenches and anti-tank ditches, running like scars across the countryside. The fortifications extended back into the city itself, where steel, sandbag, and earthwork barricades were raised. The Palace of Soviets, a naked skeleton of steel girders, which was to have risen as the world's highest building, started to come down as raw material for defense. The Moscow Métro, most modern subway system in the world, was given over to movements of troops and supplies.

In all small shops which were not evacuated, work was turned entirely to war orders. One, which had been making pots and pans, started turning out hand-

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grenades. Another, which usually made cash registers and adding machines, began producing automatic rifles. Its first delivery of arms was ready November 7.

The Russians, being intensely human, did not undergo this strain without a tremor, any more than they had faced their first bombing without a qualm. When the mass evacuation began October 15, there were three days of stampede. People swarmed the railroad stations, seeking transportation, and when there was none, started on foot into the vast spaces of the east. Queues formed at food stores for the extra rations of bread, sausage, and cheese allotted to evacuees. There was a boom on the matrimonial market, as people married to go along with others whose offices or factories were being evacuated. In some organizations, the state circus, for example, there were cases of executives taking the cashbox and evacuating themselves without permission. Outside the city, on the roads east to Gorky and Vladimir, cars were stopped and looted. Inside the city, maids, relatives, or acquaintances helped themselves to the belongings and better apartments of those who had left.

When Tommy Thompson and Frederick Reinhardt, second and third secretaries of the American embassy, who remained in Moscow, returned from seeing off the diplomatic corps the night of November 15, they found the gates of Spaso House ajar, the militiaman who usually stood guard gone. In peacetime foreign diplomats had sometimes complained of the surveillance to which they were constantly subjected. Now they

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wanted it. Tommy and Freddy got back a guard by offering a militiaman daily meals if he would stand outside the gate. He did.

I know what it is to stay to the last in a city which is the objective of battle. In Paris, from Monday, June 10, 1940, when the official mass evacuation began, until Thursday, June 13, when Paris was declared an open city, I experienced that tension and even outright fear of the unknown that come from the prospect of siege, bombing, and fighting in the streets. In Moscow, all that was repeated many times over.

A great people, or a strong system, is one that can undergo such a test, know the danger and rise above it. That, Moscow did. Its nerves were steadied by a supreme display of calmness and confidence on the part of its leaders. On November 7, they went through the ritual observance of the twenty-fourth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution almost under the eyes of the Germans.

On the eve of the anniversary, the Moscow Soviet called its traditional meeting. The Mayakovsky subway station, instead of the Bolshoi Theater, was the scene of the meeting. But the important thing was that it was held, and that Stalin spoke.

'Comrades, twenty-four years have elapsed since the victory of the October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of the Soviet system in our country,' he said. 'We are now on the threshold of the next, the twenty-fifth year of existence of the Soviet system . . .' certainly a calm assurance, a sober, unhysterical beginning.

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In his studious style, semi-biblical in its clarity and tone of authority, he reviewed the progress of the war. He estimated German losses for the first four months at more than 4,500,000 dead, wounded, and prisoners, the Russian losses at 1,748,000, including 350,000 dead, 378,000 missing, and 1,020,000 wounded. He pointed out that the Blitzkrieg plan to reach the Urals and destroy Russia in two months had failed. He attributed the 'temporary reverses' of the Red army to lack of a second front and to inferiority in numbers of tanks and planes. He defined the German National Socialists as imperial reactionaries and promised that their defeat was inevitable. It was as steady a speech as has ever been delivered.

The next morning, the Red army paraded on Red Square. Again it was not a foolhardy display. Just as the Moscow Soviet had gone underground for its meeting, so the Red army went through Red Square in thirteen minutes, starting at 8 A.M., three hours before the regular time. But it did hold its parade.

Stalin stood atop Lenin's tomb, muffled to the throat in his long, unadorned greatcoat and wearing his khaki képi with the little five-pointed red star and the gold-crossed hammer and sickle above the brim. He spoke quietly into a microphone that carried his voice to the amplifiers on the Kremlin wall and sent it reverberating across Red Square.

'It is in strenuous circumstances that we are today celebrating the twenty-fourth anniversary of the October Revolution. The perfidious attack of the German brigands and the war which has been forced upon us



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have placed our country in jeopardy,' he said. 'We have temporarily lost a number of regions, the enemy has appeared at the gates of Leningrad and Moscow.'

No more did he mention the battle of Moscow. Instead, he went on to point out that the Soviet Union had been in even greater difficulties before, in 1918, when three quarters of the country was occupied, the Russians had no allies, no army, and faced a shortage of food, clothing, and arms, yet emerged victorious. Now, he said, the Soviet position was far better, with the country richer, supported by allies, and defended by a strong army.

Here Stalin, the military genius, made one of his few military miscalculations. Before Russia was invaded, he had overestimated the power of the Balkans to form a front against Germany. Now, he underestimated the power of the Germans to carry on the war.

'The enemy is not so strong as some frightened little intellectuals imagine,' he said. 'The devil is not so terrible as he is painted. Another few months, another half-year, perhaps another brief year, and Hitler Germany is bound to burst beneath the weight of its crimes.'

There, Stalin was wrong. A year later, the Germans were to be laying siege to Stalingrad. But they were defeated before Moscow, and Stalin's confidence was an important factor in that defeat.

Nine days later, the battle was on again. The Germans started their second general offensive against Moscow November 16. The great armies collided, the plan and counter-plan started working.

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The Germans struck their first blow on the Russian right flank. The third and fourth tank armies attacked in the Volokolamsk sector and farther north toward the Moscow Sea, the artificial body of water forming part of the Moscow-Volga canal system forty miles north of the capital. The panzer divisions drove the Russians behind the Volga, north of the Moscow Sea, and covered their own left flank under this great lake.

Then the offensive spread southward. Part of the German left wing descended on Moscow through Klin, Solnechnogorsk, and Istra, part carried out the encircling maneuver through Yakhroma and Dimitrov toward Zagorsk.

The Germans hit the Russian left flank November 18, when the second tank army attacked southeast of Tula toward Kashira and Riazan. Part of this force pushed up toward Moscow, cutting the Tula-Serpukhov highway, reaching Venev and approaching Kashira; part struck through Stalinogorsk and Mikhailov toward Riazan and Kolomna, to complete the encirclement.

In the center the Germans broke through in the Narofominsk sector, penetrating the Russian defense twelve to fifteen miles, carrying their advanced forces within twenty-five miles of the capital.

So far the German plan seemed to be succeeding. But the Russian plan also was in full operation. It called, in the first phase, for a stubborn defense. What this meant was exemplified on November 16, the first day of the German offensive, in the Volokolamsk

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sector, by one of the grandest acts of heroism of the war.

Major-General I. V. Panfilov, a dapper little fellow who had been military commissar of the middle-Asiatic Khirgiz Republic, defended the Volokolamsk-Moscow highway with the 316th Red army infantry division, later to become the 8th Guards infantry division. General Panfilov died in the field. Twenty-eight of his troops, isolated at one point, died in their trenches. But they exacted, as the price of their lives, eighteen enemy tanks. And they checked the Germans.

Those twenty-eight became Soviet immortals. A year later, their names were inscribed on a gray plaque, rimmed in black, at the Moscow Historical Museum.

The four Moscow Communist divisions went into action in the first lines. They had had little training, there were not enough automatic guns to go around, but they sacrificed their bodies to the defense. Their losses were horrible, but their resistance was strong. In sheer desperation, they delayed the Germans, while in the rear and on the flanks, other forces were gathering. Those were black days for the Communist volunteers who did not know the plan of the high command. Their slaughter became one of the great glories of the defense of Moscow.

Those were bright days for the Germans. They had estimated the maximum strength of the Red army at three hundred and thirty divisions. They had counted that number, they thought, in defeat. Now, before

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them appeared a few ragged new divisions of hastily mobilized workers, fighting with the spirit of demons but without the arms, training, or experience of regular troops. The Germans thought the end was in sight. Berlin editors were advised, December 2, to leave space on their front pages to announce the fall of Moscow.

During the first week of December, the Germans reached their farthest points of advance, cutting the Moscow-Volga canal to the north at Dimitrov, spreading south through Istra, Zvenigorod, and Narofominsk and looping around Tula, north almost to Kashira and east to Mikhailov and Yerifan. The nearest they came to Moscow was the outskirts of the little Moscow-Volga canal port Khimki, five miles north of Moscow, connected with the capital by a commuters' bus line.

Stalin, at that moment of crisis, was in personal command of the defense. Lieutenant-General K. K. Rokossovsky, hard-pressed in the Istra Lakes sector, received a telephone call: 'Stalin speaking. Report your situation.' The general outlined his position. 'Hold firm, we'll help you,' was the answer. Major-General P. A. Belov, moving into position in the Kashira sector, was called to the telephone, told by the same voice to liquidate the enemy break-through at Venev. Other generals, all along the front, had similar experiences.

In the meantime, regularly, as often as every quarter of an hour, trains were passing along railway lines to the front, carrying fresh young troops, dressed in warm winter uniforms and armed to the teeth with

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modern automatic weapons. At first they disappeared in the forests. With them were two Cossack cavalry corps, the First Guards, commanded by General Belov, south of Moscow, the Second Guards, commanded by Major-General Lev Dovator, north of Moscow. Dovator, like Panfilov, fought his last battle before Moscow.

Inside and outside the German armored claws, these reserves stiffened the Russian resistance. The Germans began to scratch vainly for ground. Their left arm was pinned down on the Moscow-Volga canal. Their center was blocked east of Narofominsk. Their right arm was stopped before Kashira. They dangled awkwardly, in danger. The Russians' hour to strike, with their full force, had come.

The Red army launched its counter-offensive on December 6. By December 11, it had achieved these results:

Lieutenant-General V. D. Leliushenko defeated the German 1st tank division, 14th and 36th motorized infantry divisions, took Rogachev and surrounded Klin.

Lieutenant-General V. I. Kuznetsov defeated the 6th and 7th tank and 23d infantry divisions, took Yakhroma, and drove southwest of Klin.

Lieutenant-General A. A. Vlasov defeated the 2d tank and 106th infantry divisions, and took Solnechnogorsk.

Lieutenant-General K. K. Rokossovsky defeated the 5th, 10th, and 11th tank divisions, the 35th infantry division, and took Istra.

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Lieutenant-General L. A. Govorov defeated the 252d, 87th, 78th, and 276th infantry divisions, and took Kulibiakino.

Lieutenant-General I. V. Boldin defeated the 3d and 4th tank divisions, S.S. 'Greater Germany' Regiment, and 296th infantry division, and threw the Germans back northeast of Tula.

Major-General P. A. Belov defeated the 17th tank, 29th motorized infantry, and 167th infantry divisions, and took Venev and Stalinogorsk.

Lieutenant-General F. I. Golikov defeated the 18th tank and 10th motorized infantry divisions, and took Mikhailov and Yerifan.

The German flanks were broken, their center rolled back, their campaign ruined. They started their retreat.

In the battle of Moscow, from November 16 to December 10, the Soviet high command estimated the Red army killed more than 85,000 Germans, captured or destroyed 1434 tanks, 5416 vehicles, 575 field guns, 339 mortars, and 870 machine guns.

These estimates covered two periods. During the first, from November 16 to December 6, when the Germans were on the offensive, they included 55,170 dead, 777 tanks, 534 vehicles, 178 guns, 119 mortars, and 224 machine guns destroyed. During the second, from December 6 to 10, when the Russians were on the offensive, they included 30,000 dead, 386 tanks, 4317 vehicles, 305 guns, 101 mortars, and 515 machine guns captured, and 271 tanks, 565 vehicles, 92 guns, 119 mortars, and 131 machine guns destroyed.

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The date which was given, and will probably go down in history, for the start of the Russian counter-offensive, was December 6. Actually, out there on the front I found some forces had gone into the attack as early as November.

On the south, the Germans reached the village of Piatnitsa, just south of Kashira, but never entered that city or damaged the great Kashira power plant which supplies much of Moscow's electricity. On the north, they were checked at Dimitrov, after they succeeded in establishing two small bridgeheads across the Moscow-Volga canal.

The wall of resistance, beyond which the Germans never passed, began to rise late in November when the Cossacks went into line. General Belov's First Guards cavalry corps entered Kashira November 25, and rode from there to drive the Germans back from Venev. General Dovator's Second Guards cavalry corps co-operated with General Rokossovsky's sixteenth army, defending the Moscow-Leningrad highway and driving the Germans west from the Istra Lakes. That gallant band of horsemen then made a forced march seventy-five miles south to support the fifth Red army, smashed the German 78th infantry division, and finally turned back to the north to complete its campaign before Moscow in the Volokolamsk and Ruza sectors.

The first real setback was administered to the Germans December 2, when General Vlasov's infantry stormed Kiev, twenty miles north of Moscow. Solnechnogorsk was left by the Germans December 10,

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so quickly that the town showed little damage, despite nineteen days of enemy occupation. Klin was recaptured December 14. There, the Germans attempted to hold, but were quickly surrounded. For the first time in this war, the Russians offered an encircled enemy garrison a chance to capitulate. The enemy refused. Three thousand of them were killed.

That drama was being played inside the semicircle around Moscow. Outside, there was another. The Germans had carefully aimed their wedges at the junctions of the Russian northwest, west, and southwest fronts, calculating on a swift break-through at those normally soft spots and a quick decision. It was an excellent plan — if executed quickly. Otherwise, they ran the risk of having the Russians converge on them from all sides. That was precisely what happened.

From the northwest, General Ivan Konev's forces pushed down to the outskirts of Kalinin, waited there from October 20 to December 6, and then joined the general counter-offensive. The Germans set fire to Kalinin December 15 and abandoned the city. From the southwest, General Golikov's army marched from Riazan into Mikhailov and Yerifan while Belov's cavalry rode down from the north and Boldin's forces lashed out from the inside of the ring around Tula.

The Germans were caught in a trap of their own making. They had made a mistake they were to repeat a year later at Stalingrad. The Allies had often been criticized for doing 'too little, too late.' The Germans undertook 'too much, too soon.'



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The men who immolated themselves willingly on the altar of Moscow did not make their sacrifices in vain. Their city was saved. For the Germans, the unwilling sacrifices and ghastly horrors of the winter campaign were only beginning.

## General Winter

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**I**T WAS only about a hundred miles from Moscow to the front. I rode for two days and sat up for two nights, trying to cover that distance — and I could not make it. That was my first lesson in the potency of old General Winter. It taught me a lot about why the Germans, fighting both the Red army and winter, could not cover the same distance from the front to Moscow.

That lesson also taught me that General Winter did not belong to the Red army. If he did, he should have been shot for treason, because he opposed the Russians just as much as he did the Germans. He was fighting for no one but himself.

We heard in Moscow, during that first winter of war, that a vague idea had gone abroad that winter was all on the Russians' side; that all the Germans' woes were due entirely to the weather, and not at all to the Red army. It would have been very hard to sell that

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idea to the men who fought the Germans to a standstill before Moscow, and then hunched their way through snow and bitter cold to drive back the enemy. They, too, suffered and died at the hands of General Winter.

But two factors did favor the Russians in that first winter campaign. The weather was less severe on the defender than on the attacker, and since the Germans were on the offensive at the crucial point of the campaign, since the great issue was whether they would take or fail to take Moscow, they were at a disadvantage. Then the Russians were fully prepared for winter with their felt boots, padded jackets, fur hats, and white capes, their skis, sleds, and sleighs, while the Germans were completely unprepared — a ghastly, almost inconceivable error on the part of so supposedly brilliant a high command.

So victory in the first winter campaign went to the Russians — not decisive or even very far-reaching victory, because General Winter was still there, fighting only for himself and against the Red army's counter-offensive, but nevertheless, clear-cut victory.

This turn in the war first became apparent on the sharp early-winter evening of November 29 when it was announced Marshal Timoshenko's southwestern forces, including the 9th Red army of General Kharitonov and the fifty-sixth Red army of General Remizov, had recaptured Rostov. 'A blow to the enemy,' that communiqué was headed. Ten days later, on December 9, there came 'another blow to the enemy.' General K. A. Meretzkov's northwestern forces had

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recaptured Tikhvin, back door to Leningrad. Three days later came the greatest blow of them all. On the night of December 12 was announced the defeat of the Germans before Moscow and the start of the counter-offensive by General Zhukov's western forces.

My personal introduction to General Winter was made the next morning, Saturday, the thirteenth of December. The foreign commissariat sent a message to the Grand Hotel, Kuibyshev, late the night before, almost as soon as the communiqué was issued, advising the correspondents that they would fly that morning to Moscow. We had often fretted at the bureaucracy which delayed trips we requested so long that they were usually no longer news when and if we were granted them. This, or any other time, when the Soviet authorities wanted us to make a trip, there was not an inch of red tape to be found anywhere under the deepest snowdrift. On the very day that the communiqué was published, announcing victory in the battle of Moscow, we were already back in the capital writing the stories that were, for us, some of the most exhilarating of the war, and that should have been, for the Allies, some of the best propaganda of the war.

On the way we met General Winter in air combat. At Kuibyshev, it was a clear, crisp morning. Snow was stacked and frozen in grotesquely shaped piles around the airport, concealing the vast, open plane park. Inside, amid the fighters and bombers, their noses pointed keenly into the wind, was a twin-engined Soviet-built Douglas transport plane, her side

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door open, her propellers turning idly. That was our ship.

We climbed in, squeezed side by side on the benches along each wall, and heaped over us the woolen blankets which had been scattered on the floor. Counting noses, we found we were thirteen for that flight on the thirteenth. No one would admit to harboring any superstitions in the superstitionless land of the Soviets, but a few uneasy glances were exchanged. We found the plane was not heated, but individual, inner heating was promptly provided. There was a round, low table in the center of the floor, under the gun turret in the roof. A bottle of vodka was placed on the table, for heating purposes. From the outside, the door was slammed shut. That cut off the draft which had been sweeping gustily through the plane, but did not diminish the cold. It simply enclosed us in an icy compartment.

The plane trundled to the runway of packed ice and snow, made a short dash, and lifted easily into the air. Up a few hundred feet, she turned west over the broad white fields and black forests toward Moscow.

General Winter attacked immediately, grasping us in the coldest clutch I have ever felt. It was the kind of cold that does not make you shiver, but does make you paralyzed; the kind, I supposed, that froze people to death. We tightened our earflaps and gloves, coats and blankets, but that did no good. The cold was inside our clothes. It was inside our bones.

We improvised our own defenses against the cold. Philip Jordan waved the vodka bottle at it in a mystic

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manner, like the incense-shaker in an Orthodox church ceremony, presumably trying to drive away the devil. It only came closer. Larry Lesueur hopped up and down, flapping his arms like a big black penguin. Walter Kerr sat on the floor, took off his shoes and socks, and rubbed his feet. Robert Magidoff and I tried to huddle together, but we were held at least a foot apart by our wads of clothing. Robert did not feel well. I watched him for a while, and then decided I did not feel well either. Never before nor since have I been airsick, but that time I was. I blamed it on the attack of Winter. I went down to miserable defeat.

As though that were not enough, Winter put on another attack. Near Moscow, the sky dissolved into a dull gray fluid, washing the horizon away in snow. The visibility, like the temperature, must have been about forty below zero, either Fahrenheit or Centigrade. Wheeling down through the snow, the plane started to skip the tree-tops. At one crossroad, we circled several times. I had visions of the pilot being lost and trying to read the signposts. He was low enough to do that.

In case that seems to be an exaggeration, I can support my somewhat confused evidence by the actual fact that a later plane on that same run collided with a railroad train. While doing its tree-top skimming stunt, it nicked a pile of steel pipes on a flatcar, spun around and backed into a heap of snow conveniently drifted near-by. Commander Samuel Frankel, U.S.N., who was aboard, finished that trip by train, with a bump on his forehead.

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Our plane, finding no flatcars but picking up a railway line, followed it toward Moscow. One of the crew came back from the pilot's cabin, climbed up on the table and kept watch for enemy aircraft through the top turret. Unfortunately, he did not find any. Unfortunately, I thought, because by that time I should have welcomed a nice warm blast of machine-gun fire and a few feet's drop into the comfort of a snowdrift.

Somehow, among the chimneys and telegraph poles which seemed to be towering above us, the pilot threaded his way to the airport, circled it, and ran in for the landing. Just as our wheels were hovering above the runway, I turned a pair of very glazed eyes toward the window and saw a pair of fighters sprinting at right-angles toward us. Those fighters looked as though they were on a hurry call, and were not stopping for anything like a correspondent-carrying Douglas. In a few seconds, I thought, we are going to make an awful mess of each other. But our pilot saw them, rose again to his habitual altitude of a few feet, made another turn through the snow and cold around the airport, and this time coasted to a landing.

The day was five hours older than when we started from Kuibyshev. I felt five decades older.

Moscow must have been a magnificent spectacle that afternoon. I say must have been, because I was in no condition to register it properly. I caught a few glimpses of little fir trees and slightly overgrown doll houses, set up in the middle of the Leningrad chaussée to make the road look, from the air, like a town in a forest. Then there were the tall modern buildings and

## GENERAL WINTER

the low ancient structures of the city, still standing side by side after two months of battle. I was surprised by the number of pedestrians, and particularly by the number of women, patiently shoveling snow into trucks, as they had done that winter ages before, when there had been no war in the east.

It was only after we had reached the warm, mothering breast of the Hôtel Métropole that I began to recover. I was deposited in room 285, at the back of the second floor. As I sat there, it came to me gradually that this was a pretty, blue-walled room, with two windows, a radiator under each window, and heating issuing forth from each radiator. Beyond the windows rose the brown wall of the old Chinese City, and beyond that, the gray stone hulk of the Lubianka. I looked into the white-tiled bathroom, and found there was a tub. I remembered, with something of a shock, that there was only one tub in the entire Grand Hotel, Kuibyshev, and it did not work.

Suddenly, I felt very glad for myself, and a little sorry for the German pilots who had to fly in that weather and then return to barracks, in some town they had been made to devastate and occupy, far less comfortable even than the Grand Hotel, Kuibyshev.

I felt better than that, when the Métropole performed an absolute miracle, producing for lunch caviar, hors d'oeuvres, hot ham and green peas, and coffee, with flagons of vodka, red and white wine, and beer, and heaps of bread and butter on the side.

Tchijova came bustling into room 285, as though she had not missed a day's work, dropped her handbag



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## MOSCOW DATELINE

and the newspapers one after another as she had always done, until everything was arranged in the proper order, and proceeded to read to me the dispatches:

Acting Army, Red Star, December 12 — The battle grows daily in violence. Today troops of the N unit struck a sensitive blow on the enemy and captured several populated points of exclusive importance. The enemy aviation tries to stop our advance, but its foogass bombs have only undoubtful significance . . .

Her rare vocabulary gave warmth and color to that day of heroic victory over the Germans.

I began to think General Winter himself was not so tough, after all. He had put me down, in that first round, but I was up again. I did not realize that the second round was coming soon.

They rang the bell two days later, and took us right into Old Winter's corner of the front. It was supposed to be General Belov's sector, but before we got there, we crossed General Winter, and this time we lost by a complete knock-out.

We left the Métropole just before noon December 15 in three big ZIS cars, the Soviet version of a Buick, manufactured in the Stalin plant, Moscow. The first trip to the front, just three months before, had been made in little M-1's, something like a Ford, built at the Molotov factory, Gorky. The M-1 bounced and bucked a good deal, but finally took us through the mud. The ZIS provided comfort that was too lovely to last.

Philip Jordan and I settled down in the back seat of the car assigned to us, stretched out our legs and

## GENERAL WINTER

lollled in sheer luxury as the ZIS headed south. We were headed first for Kashira, but for some reason, known only to the guide who sat in the front seat with our driver, or perhaps to Palgunov who rode in the car behind, we took the Moscow-Kolomna road, instead of the Moscow-Kashira highway, running parallel to it and just to the west. Just before nightfall we reached Kolomna, a quiet little town which had only recently been an immediate objective of battle and which still hid behind its barricades. There we stopped to find a side road which would take us thirty miles southwest to Kashira. There, also, one of the ZIS cars decided it would go no farther.

While the drivers assembled to discuss these two problems, Palgunov, with an unerring nose for nourishment, picked out a dark, shuttered house, knocked, and we were admitted to a restaurant. Inside there was light, warmth, and hospitality. Bowls of steaming soup and platters of hot meat-balls and boiled potatoes were produced. For dessert, Palgunov conjured up out of his baggage a little blue pottery jug of yellow Chartreuse liqueur with which we sweetened the tea.

Outside, after supper, we found a sullen, ominous darkness had fallen, and answers had been found to our two problems. The first was that a country road ran west through the fields and forests, a dirt track at best, but marked by telegraph poles which could be followed. The second was that the passengers from the stalled ZIS would be transferred to the other two cars. Cholerton crammed his big body into the jump-seat in front of me. Eric McLoughlin, of the Sydney,

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Australia, *Morning Herald*, sprawled on the seat in front of Philip. Gone was our luxury.

We turned away from the circumspect civilization of Kolomna, the charted course of the Moscow road, into the wild, empty borderland of the Steppes. The car groped its way deliberately along the track vaguely indented in the snow. Its headlights picked out, one after another, the gray, weather-beaten telegraph poles that stood like beacons amid pools of blackness.

Suddenly, the snow came again, in that way storms have of starting in Russia, as though the atmosphere, agonized by its oversaturation, could contain its burden no longer and precipitated the heavy, cloying mass to earth. Our headlight rays were deflected, as though a thick white sheet had been hung immediately in front of them. The path disappeared in the untracked fields.

We pressed on to the next telegraph pole. Beyond that, nothing was visible in the blinding swirls of snow. The driver stopped, went forward on foot to find the direction, probing with his feet for the road under the snow and peering ahead for another pole. With a new bearing, he tried to drive on again.

Abruptly, the car lurched off the road, burying its right side in a ditch and settling up to the hub-caps in soft snow. A grinding sound and a shout from behind told us the other ZIS had taken the same path.

The drivers made a few half-hearted efforts to churn their way back up to the road. They were hopeless.

'Let's face it, chums,' said Philip; 'we're here for the night.'

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Outside, there seemed to be a faint black line of trees in the distance, and before that, only the unbroken sweep of snow. Nowhere were there any signs of human life.

This, I thought, must be how the German motorized infantry felt, stalled in troop carriers while trying to reach Moscow. At least, we did not have to worry about personal foes creeping up on us with hand-grenades and automatic rifles. We were secure behind the Red army lines. Our only foe was the impersonal General Winter.

He was a very real enemy out there, whining weirdly, striking savagely at any living thing exposed to him on the steppe, making existence seem impossible. The wind, screaming and scratching at the doors and windows, began to penetrate the car. The snow drifted higher and higher. The cold settled closer and closer.

A young reporter once wrote a story about winter in Russia, and received a rough rebuke from his office which advised him that there was no use talking about snow and cold unless he told specifically how cold it was and how deep the snow was. Out there, it was impossible to tell. It may have been the fifty-seven degrees below zero Fahrenheit, about which Hitler was later to complain; or it may have been only half-way down to that record low. There may have been ten feet of snow in the drifts and only one foot in windswept stretches. But it was terribly cold, and there was a lot of snow.

For a while we talked of that, and of people freezing to death, and of wolves roaming these steppes in packs.

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That reminded Mac of the animals of his homeland, and he talked of emus, wombats, and wallabies. We swapped jokes, but after a while we reached the point where everyone had heard all that anyone could recall.

We twitched and fidgeted in our cramped quarters, sitting straight upright, and finally dozed fitfully until the pale gray dawn leaked over the horizon. Palgunov trudged through the snow, bringing a box of chocolates and another jug of Chartreuse for breakfast. Soon an army truck came down the road, plowing its way easily through the drifts. The troops leaped out, heaved our cars from the ditch back onto the road, and broke a path for us to the Moscow-Kashira highway. A day late, we reached our first destination — the same kind of tardiness that ruined the schedule of the German offensive.

That second evening we drove out of Kashira toward General Belov's headquarters. This time it was a clear, starlit night. The wind whipped the snow from the road, baring a treacherous coat of ice. We rode four miles south, nearly to Piatnitsa, farthest point of the German advance on the left flank of the Moscow defenses. There the road dipped into a steep valley. The cars skidded to the bottom of the decline, started up the other side, and could not reach the top. Several times they backed down and tried again, their tires shrieking on the ice, but each time they failed to get sufficient traction and came to a standstill. There was nothing to do but turn around and return to Kashira. But the hill we had descended was equally impassable. We were stranded for the second night.

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'Let's face it, chums,' Philip started to say . . .

'Face it, nothing, let's foot it,' interrupted Mac.

So we decided to walk back to Kashira rather than sit up again in the cars. The wind ripped our faces, patches of snow caught our feet, the starlight wrought ominous shadows and strange mirages from distant trees as we made that hike. Sliding, sometimes falling, we made our way, talking in whispers to keep together without attracting attention, for now there was real danger of a sentry mistaking our foreign voices for German and opening fire.

This, I thought, must be how the German infantry felt, trying to march on Moscow.

We reached the blacked-out hulk of Kashira, explained our stroll satisfactorily to the sentry, and walked down the silent streets to the headquarters of the city Soviet. A door opened, letting a cloud of steam and a shaft of light escape into the night, and we entered to find shelter. We sat up, that night, around the conference table in the main office of the Kashira Soviet, under the inevitable lithographs of Stalin, Molotov, and Kalinin, looking down on what was certainly the strangest session they ever beheld.

The next morning we abandoned our trip and drove ignominiously back to Moscow, covering in a few hours the same distance it had taken us two days to ride on the outward drive. We had not reached the front. But we had learned very intimately, to a lesser degree but to some extent, what the Germans had been up against, from General Winter alone, in their drive on Moscow. I hated to think what it must have



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been like with the Red army, as well as the weather, in the opposition.

By then it was no longer the battle of Moscow on the front. It was the battle of the winter line. The Germans had announced their withdrawal to what Hitler later described as the Taganrog-Ladoga line, and the Russians were in pursuit.

The German objective was to maintain positions as far advanced as would be practical, as jumping-off points for a spring offensive against Moscow, which remained their major goal. The Russian aim was to drive the Germans as far back as possible, to leave greater depth for the spring defense. The Red army did not go as far as it would have liked. No army ever does, until it wins the final victory — and sometimes not even then, as was the Allied case in 1918. But neither did the Germans hold as far forward as they would have liked. The practical result of the campaign was that Moscow, having been saved in 1941, was made secure for 1942.

While Moscow was the main stake, the game was played all along the twelve hundred miles of front from the Black to the Baltic Sea. The Russians followed up their initial successes at Rostov, Tikhvin, and Moscow with a dramatic comeback in the Crimea at the close of 1941. Lieutenant-General I. I. Petrov's Sebastopol garrison, last left on Crimean ground, surprisingly stood under the assaults of seven German divisions, and was able to report by December 26 that its position was solid, it was settling down for the siege. On that day the Red army of the Caucasus

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landed on the Kerch peninsula, northeast arm of the Crimea, and four days later made a new descent on the southeast port of Feodosia. The Germans took back Feodosia in January, but Kerch and Sebastopol remained throughout the winter, to be the first German objectives the next spring.

In the Ukraine, the Russians drove to the very walls of Taganrog, southern anchor of the German winter line. They came within sight of the smokestacks of that industrial town, above the mists of the muddy Azov Sea. Unable to take Taganrog, they broke through the German line farther north to Lozovaya, threatening Kharkov with an outflanking movement which never materialized, but which served as a constant and annoying menace to the Germans throughout the winter.

Around Moscow the Russians cleared the distant approaches of the capital as far as Kaluga, one hundred miles to the southwest late in December. They rolled the Germans back from the Nara River, and took Mojhaïsk seventy miles west of Moscow, January 20. They crossed the Lama River, seventy-five miles northwest of Moscow, January 18, and marched on January 20 to Toropez, two hundred and forty miles northwest of the capital.

I had a chance to see one phase of the battle northwest of Moscow. Equipped this time with snow shovels and escorted by a towing car to haul us out of ditches, we drove north to Klin late in December and then west along the Klin-Volokolamsk road. Out there, I could see, it was not a broken German army

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that was being pursued to the west. It was a still-powerful machine which had stalled and was backing up for a fresh start. I could see, too, it was not a feeble Red army that was tottering after a beaten foe. It was a still-growing force which was just beginning to feel its own offensive power and was actively precipitating the retreat of its enemy.

Klin, by night, was a chamber of horrors. When we arrived there after dark December 19, the town lay in absolute blackness, the blackness of homes that had been burned and of others without light. It was infested with mines, the kind that explode under the pressure of one false step off the narrow paths traced by Red army engineers, or at the slightest movement of a door, window, chair, or drawer. Enemy bands still lurked in the neighborhood, isolated from their main forces, but still hiding in the forests, waiting for a chance to escape back through the Red army lines. There was an outburst of firing on the outskirts of Klin that night as we slept in a bare little cottage. A group of Germans had approached the town, evidently in search of food we were told the next morning, but two had been shot dead by sentries, the others fleeing back to their hiding-place.

The highway to the west was an even more ghastly sight. The first village, Bakhlanova, still smoldered in the charred ruins, out of which rose only four of its original collection of fifty houses. There the Germans had time to apply their torches before retreating. The next village, Petrovskoye, was intact. Hundreds of machines were parked in the yards, roads, and fields,

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some overturned, twisted by fire or blasted by explosions, but all pointed west, as though they had been driven by a strong wind. There the Germans had been overtaken. From that point the road wound like a narrow tunnel through frosted pine forests, littered by all that remained of the once-proud German sixth and seventh tank divisions. For twenty-five miles stretched this graveyard of the panzers, marked by masses of charred vehicles, piles of frozen bodies, and a jumble of personal effects. I counted up to one thousand wrecked tanks, armored cars, troop-carrying machines, trucks, automobiles, and motorcycles, and then grew tired of counting. Hundreds of bodies of the troops who once had manned those machines could be seen sprawled grotesquely in the snow. Hundreds more lay buried beneath the drifts or beneath white birch crosses.

It was interesting to compare my total of ruined machines with the figure of seven hundred and fifty officially claimed by the Sovinformburo for this sector. I pointed out to a Red army officer later the evident underestimation.

'We'd rather underestimate,' he said. 'The Germans overestimated, and look what happened to them.'

I was interested also to note my personal reaction to these horrors. Wars in Spain, France, and Russia had never hardened my naturally queasy stomach or overcome my repulsion at the sight of violent death. Here, the bodies, in small groups of twelve to fifty, frozen in strange positions, many with bent arms still uplifted as though to ward off the inevitable, seemed

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more like wax statues than men. The snow and ice clothed their deaths in a merciful cleanliness.

Amid the unmistakable evidences of disaster for the Germans were signs that, even in defeat, they were good soldiers. Tanks stood at intervals, on rises and at turns in the road, their guns still pointed east, where they had been stationed to cover the retreat. Breeches had been removed from the big guns. Abandoned machines had been stacked with hay, soaked with gasoline, and burned by the Germans themselves.

The Russians were restoring life to that death-ridden scene. Women who had come back from the forests to their homes dug patiently in the ruins of those that had been burned, cleaned the rooms, porches, and yards of those that had escaped the torch. Already the washing hung on some lines. Children played about the German machines in the fields. Workers were busy clearing the road, burying the dead, lighting fires under frozen German cars, and quartering dead horses to provide meat for men who still lived.

Toward the end of that road, we came to the village of Nogornoye, headquarters for a few hours of Lieutenant-General Vassily Ivanovich Kuznetzov, who was making a series of one-day stops with his fast-moving army. Nogornoye was a one-street village of picturesque log cabins. General Kuznetzov's headquarters were in the living room of one of the cabins, otherwise no more distinguished than its neighbors. General Kuznetzov himself was a small, fair-haired man of middle age, with a blond mustache and a mild manner which might have been called mouse-like,

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except for his exploits then on the Moscow front, and a year later on the Stalingrad front. He invited us to his room, and on his map, under a glistening array of three metal-plated ikons, he outlined the situation. Volokolamsk, he said, was about to fall. When we returned to Moscow later, we learned from the communiqués that, as he spoke, it had actually fallen.

The indications were that the Germans were preparing successive lines of defense, based on Gzhatsk, Viazma, and Smolensk. As the rival forces came back into balance and winter began to have its full effect on the Russian counter-offensive, the Moscow front became stabilized. The Germans lost part of their first line around Mojhaïsk, but succeeded in holding Gzhatsk. That spearhead proved too narrow to be thrust against Moscow in the next year's campaign. Farther north, the Russians held a deep salient from the Kalinin front through Toropetz. That proved a sharp thorn in the German side throughout the next year.

The Red army made one more major winter move from the northwest front against Staraya Russa. It began with all the dashing success of the drives farther south. The German sixteenth army was surrounded in mid-February. The move ended in failure. For the German command adopted the tactics it was to employ later at Stalingrad of leaving encircled forces in their advanced positions, supplying them by air, and hoping to use them to lead subsequent operations. The sixteenth army suffered, but held its ground and eventually was relieved.

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The announcement of that encirclement, incidentally, was later recognized to have been a mistake. It was one of the rare cases, paralleled by the recapture and later loss of Feodosia, in which the Soviet command made known, to its sorrow, the developments of an action while it was still in progress and the outcome was doubtful. Lieutenant-General Pavel Alexeivich Kurochkin, then forty-two years old, a professional soldier who commanded the seventeenth Red army during the Finnish war, and then the Trans-Baikal and Orel military districts, and who succeeded Marshal Voroshilov in command of the northwest front, directed the action at Staraya Russa. Kurochkin was later replaced by Marshal Timoshenko.

As the winter grew old and the communiqués less communicative, the Russian people looked forward eagerly to February 23, the twenty-fourth anniversary of creation of the Red army, for an announcement of great new victories which they believed were being forged on the front. They heard on that day an order by Stalin, as commissar of defense, warning that the enemy was still strong. The communiqué of that day announced only the occupation of Dorogobuzh, an advance southwest of Viazma which did not succeed in cutting off that German stronghold.

General Winter, from then on, had supreme command of the battlefields.

## Interlude in Iran

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**M**OHAMMED SAED had given a garden party the afternoon of Sunday, August 24, 1941, at his dacha outside Moscow.

Most of the young people of the foreign colony attended, for Saed was very popular among them. They liked his affable, rather naïve manner, his spontaneous, rather boy-like smile, and his fluent talk in a French vocabulary that provided the word 'chose' (thing) for any noun that did not come to mind immediately in any better form.

This cheerful, chubby, brown-faced, gray-haired little man was Iranian ambassador to the Soviet Union and dean of the diplomatic corps after Graf von der Schulenburg. His daughter, Lilly, affectionately known to the diplomatic corps as 'the Persian lamb,' was married to an Englishman, John Wallis, former Moscow correspondent of Reuter's, then assigned to Ankara. Saed's parties were always refreshing.



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I was unable to go that Sunday because there was no end to the military stories to be written. Others who went told me they spent a pleasant afternoon in the garden. There was a slight feeling of tension. That was because there had been vague mumblings among the British for several days about what might happen to Iran if she did not cease harboring German agents and unless she cooperated sincerely with the Allies. The then-neutrals chidingly suggested the British look for a 'Persian Quisling' to install in power in Iran, and let it go at that. Saed passed it all over smoothly.

I am sorry now that I did not attend the party, for it was a sort of prelude to the first joint military action undertaken by the Soviet Union and Great Britain under their new alliance, and their first combined political action on the territory of a third country — the occupation of Iran.

This occupation presented a difficult problem, at a delicate point, the crossroads of the Soviet Union and the British Empire. It involved a third nation proud of its independence, rich in resources, and, above all, important for its geographical position between the Caucasus and India and on two great world routes, east to the outposts of Britain and north to the fronts of Russia.

Before dawn of the morning after his party, Saed received a telephone call at his dacha. He was summoned to the Kremlin. Foreign Commissar Molotov handed him a long note.

It started, in the polite way that diplomatic notes

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have of beginning, no matter how harsh are to be their conclusions:

'The Soviet government, guided by a feeling of friendship for the Iranian people and by respect for the sovereignty of Iran, has always, invariably, conducted a policy of cementing friendly relations between the Soviet Union and Iran.'

It reviewed the history of Soviet-Iranian relations, based on a treaty of 1921. Article VI of this pact provided that, in case a third power attempted to intervene in Iran, or use that country as a base against Russia, thereby creating a threat to Russia or her allies with which Iran was unable to cope, the Soviet Union should have the right to send troops into Iran and keep them there until the danger had been averted.

The note proceeded to relate the activities of German agents in Iran, who had obtained high official posts in more than fifty Iranian institutions and used their employment as camouflage for attempts to organize terrorist bands in near-by Soviet territory, including the oil fields of Baku, and to prepare a military coup d'état in Iran.

'The situation created in Iran in consequence of the abovementioned circumstances contains great dangers,' the note said.

The Soviet Union and Great Britain had made three requests to Iran to eliminate this danger, the note said, the latest having been made on August 16, and all of them having failed to bring a satisfactory reply. Therefore, it concluded:

'The Soviet government has been forced to take the

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necessary measures: namely, to march troops temporarily into Iranian territory for purposes of self-defense.'

As Saed was reading this document in the Kremlin, a similar statement was being issued by the Foreign Office in London. Early on the morning of August 25, Soviet and British forces entered Iran.

Saed drove back to his embassy, and drafted immediately a telegram to Teheran. He was a realist. After years in Russia as a student at St. Petersburg, consul at Baku, and ambassador at Moscow, he knew resistance was impractical. He was a brave man. After a long career in the service of Riza Shah Pahlevi, he knew the violences, often physical, with which that strong-willed monarch received any information or advice distasteful to himself. Yet Saed recommended that his government withdraw its armed forces from the frontiers and submit without resistance.

His advice was not immediately followed. Some scattered resistance was offered, but as Saed had warned, it was futile. The Red army marched south from the Caucasus toward Tabriz and Asterabad, on the west and east sides of the Caspian Sea. The British forces marched north from the Persian Gulf and east from Iraq, taking the southern port and oil center of Bandar Mashur and Abadan, and the central oil bases of Naft-I-Shah and Kasr-I-Shirin. The Allied units moved mechanically, promptly on schedule, as though conducting maneuvers on their own ground.

The march laid bare a strange land that had been largely sealed to foreigners for centuries. Soviet cor-

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respondents with the Red army reported they met wise old peasants in the fields, who welcomed them under Article VI of the Soviet-Iranian treaty of 1921, an article which was little, if at all, known to the most polished diplomats of Moscow before the Allied entry into Iran. They reported meeting other primitive folk who did not know the outside world was at war.

This ancient land, which had been struggling to catch up with modernity only since Riza Shah, commander-in-chief of the army, had become ruler in 1925, was unable to wage 1941-model war. Its government announced, August 28, it had issued a 'cease fire' order to its already scattering forces.

The Russians and British marched on toward Teheran, in accordance with a time-table carefully drawn up and agreed upon in advance. Riza Shah, absolute monarch for sixteen years, abdicated September 16, leaving the throne to his son, then twenty-one years old, Mohammed Riza Pahlevi. The old shah drove south to Isfahan, and thence into comfortable exile under the protection of the British. Soviet and British troops entered the outskirts of Teheran the next day, September 17, and there they camped. Iran was in Allied hands.

Saed was a patriot. Having bowed to the inevitable present, he set to work immediately on a future in which the Soviet and British troops would evacuate his country, leaving the Iranians to conduct their own affairs as loyal allies. In official conversations he recalled constantly the adage, two is company, three is a crowd, and suggested that since no two of the three

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could be chosen to live together, both the Russians and British should withdraw, leaving Iran to herself.

His was a far-sighted policy, one which his government adopted and which eventually should come to realization. He returned to Teheran to further that policy as foreign minister. But in the meantime, having achieved their immediate aim of ridding Iran of German agents, the Allies had another aim, to maintain, improve, and protect the routes across Iran for supplies to Russia.

A treaty of alliance between the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and Iran was concluded January 29, 1942. By that time the Russian and British forces had withdrawn to separate zones in the north and south of Iran, leaving Teheran unoccupied. The military operation was concluded successfully. There remained the delicate task of political conduct for months to come.

I flew out from Kuibyshev to Teheran March 9, 1942. In most wars correspondents look up a city in a near-by neutral country to serve as a supply base. From Spain, we went out to Perpignan, France, for supplies. From Russia, we started going out to Teheran.

The big silver Douglas, its uncamouflaged sides and wings marked with red stars, made the trip in a single day. The transition was startling, from the sparkling snow and twenty-eight-below-zero temperature of Kuibyshev at dawn to the soft purple volcanic earth and twenty-above-zero temperature of Teheran at sunset. We streaked down to Baku in six hours, pass-

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ing over the snowy steppes of southern Russia, the ice floes of the Caspian Sea, and the naked, oil-oozing soil of the Caucasus; turned directly across the Caspian, skipped over the upreaching summits of the Elburz Mountains, and came down on the Teheran plateau, just as the setting sun cast a pink glow over Demavend Mountain in the background.

The first shock was the ease with which Iran could now be entered. In the days of the old shah, an entry visa had been a rarity, hardly ever extended to a correspondent. At Baku all passengers were given inoculations which were still supposed to be required by the authorities of Iran. Yet we entered the country with no formality whatsoever, no passport inspection, no baggage examination, no reception of any kind, not even a bus to take from the airport. Even though Iran was not technically occupied, but an allied country, the Iranian government had abandoned any pretense at border control.

A car finally arrived from the United States legation to take the American passengers into town, and there came another shock. There was a housing shortage: No rooms to be had in the Ferdowsi or any other hotel. I found a room without bath in a near-by pension. Then there was an 11 P.M. curfew, by which time I had to be back in that room. I walked over, for dinner, to the Ferdowsi. It served as correspondents' headquarters for Iran, in the best traditions of the Majestic of Barcelona, the Lancaster of Paris, and the Métropole of Moscow. In the Ferdowsi, I found the first pleasant change: a table covered with snow-white linen, set with

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shining silver, and burdened with the best of food — a thick soup, an omelette, steak, roast potatoes and spinach, ice cream and Turkish coffee.

Travelers coming to Teheran from south to north considered it as the end of the world, a tawdry jumping-off place into the wilderness. Coming to it from north to south was like finding the promised land, flowing, not so much with milk and honey, which we could still find in Russia, as with tobacco and typewriter ribbons and all the other consumers' goods we lacked. The city rose out of a sand-and-gravel plateau on which hardy little plants curled, across which whirlwinds whipped the dust. To the north rose the snow-covered mountains, above foothills of jagged black stone. Inside the city there was one main shopping street, the Lalezar. Its windows were crammed with Persian silks and rugs and silver, Scotch tweeds and whisky, French perfumes and vermouth and cognac, English cloth, American toilet articles, Swiss watches, German gadgets, all the world's riches. There were even bolts of cotton cloth, stamped 'made in the U.S.S.R.,' unobtainable in the Soviet Union, but sent abroad in exchange for precious foreign moneys, used in turn to purchase supplies for prosecution of the war. The open markets were stocked with fruit and vegetables and game. The lemons particularly, to one starved for citrus fruits, shone like gold. The latest models of American automobiles flashed by in the streets. On the sidewalks Persian women trod daintily in very short dresses, with slender legs sheathed in silk stockings.

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Underneath all this surface display of wealth, the situation was not so good. There was only this single street of riches, and, gaudy as it seemed to a newcomer from the north, it was only a paper-and-paste mask for the blackness beneath it. The story of Iran seemed to me to be symbolized in the story of its theater.

Iran possessed no drama, no music, no actors, no singers, no dancers, but the old shah had decided he wanted a National Theater. So construction was begun of an immense stone building on Ferdowsi Street. After it had been raised, but before it was completed, the original architect died. Erected on weak foundations, the building began to settle and the walls cracked. So the Persians put a wooden fence around it, to hide its open wounds, and ceased its construction. There it stood, like the wreckage from a bombing, tottering, like Iran itself, on a feeble foundation.

The old Iran, too, was tottering. It was undermined by Axis propaganda. These people had been told, and many of them apparently believed, that Hitler was a Moslem, originally named Haidar, who was born in a mountain village of Iran. Sixty thousand Persians were supposed to have seen him making a pilgrimage to their holy city of Meshed. This Nazi 'Moslem,' of course, championed the cause of the Aryans, Islam being the dominant religion of Iran, and Aryan being the dominant race. Germany itself was supposed to have been named for Hermania, another mountain village of Iran.

The Germans had played on the anti-Semitic feel-



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ings of these original Aryans. The students had a song which went like this:

Come, dear Hitler,  
We await you,  
And with every step  
You take toward us,  
A million Jews  
Fall at your feet.

The students chalked their palms with the sign of the swastika, and slapped the black-frocked backs of Jews. The same sign was chalked on sidewalks and walls. I saw an old man, obviously out of his mind, walking in the middle of a street, calling something aloud. I asked a cab-driver what he was saying, and was told, in French: 'Russes, Anglais, salauds, salauds, je m'embette, je m'embette.' (Russians, English, dirty ones, dirty ones, I'm bothered, I'm bothered.)

The sores opened by Axis propaganda were being festered by an unhealthy financial condition. The Germans had flooded this market with everything from phonograph records to aspirin tablets. Now, the Persians could import almost nothing from the Allies, for there was no shipping space available. Dollars and pounds were coming in, to pay for American and British expenditures, but there was little the Persians could do with the money. The immediate result of this condition was a financial crisis. The national bank of Iran refused to buy foreign exchange at the established rates and proposed to remove its control of quotations, which would mean a reduction in the rate of thirty-six

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rials to the dollar. The dollar was actually being quoted on the black bourse at thirty-five, a point less than its official rate. The British formally opposed any change in the foreign exchange rates, on the quite legitimate grounds that the value of the pound or dollar in this local market would not correspond to its real buying power in the world market. But the Persians were dealing with a local situation. Eventually, the Melli National Bank was authorized to increase its bank-note circulation and foreign exchange transactions were resumed, but the hard feelings remained.

The economic situation was worse than the financial. The open evidences of it were to be seen in the cramped side-streets of Teheran where beggars in rags whined for alms, and women, holding their veils together with their teeth, clutched babies to their thin breasts. The poverty was appalling. Feeding these poor people was a major problem. Bread constituted the principal part of their diet, and Iran was not self-sustaining. The ministry of finance estimated the country lacked one hundred thousand tons of wheat for its annual consumption, of which sixty thousand tons had been delivered, but forty thousand were still awaited. The native press was full of complaints: 'A large part of the Iranian population is deprived of its daily bread . . . the quality of the bread is not satisfactory; especially lately, it is of very bad quality . . . We hope, at this critical moment, that our allies will fulfill their engagements concerning supplies of food . . .'

Most sinister of all was the political situation. The young shah was liked by all who met him. He seemed

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to be a personable, intelligent, well-meaning young man who took intense interest in the fate of his nation and hoped for the best. But he did little or nothing about it. The régime resembled, to a striking degree, that of the last days of France. The chief of state was weak, or had not the will to exercise what power he possessed. The cabinet was composed of hold-overs from old régimes, already discredited in the eyes of their people. The parliament engaged in endless discussions, not of the real problems, but of petty politics that affected the deputies personally. Even the French forms of parliamentary bills, debates, and votes of confidence were still retained in this Asiatic kingdom. Even worse, here was a country without political parties, with a medieval system of landlord representation, that was attempting to practice modern democracy. And the men elected to parliament could not hold office in the government. The members of the cabinet had to be chosen from the ranks of a few 'ministrables,' professional office-holders.

The country was going through a period of chronic cabinet crises. One 'ministrable' after another formed a government, only to fail to gain the confidence of the parliament and to resign, while the shah and the army, the real powers, looked on idly. Ali Khan Mansur had resigned as premier in August, during the Allied march into Iran. Ali Khan Furanghi served as premier long enough to start his country's cooperation with the Soviet Union and Great Britain, and then gave way to a succession of politicians. No permanent solution was in sight, for there was no man, unless it be the

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young shah, strong enough to hold all factions of the country together with a policy of sincere cooperation with the Allies and care for the people of Iran.

There were troubles in the provinces. One story, which I did not confirm but which was told all over Teheran, was that a United States assistant military attaché was captured by bandits while driving near the capital and was taken to the hills, where the bandit leader turned out to have been a student of his at an American school and released him with apologies. There was another story, of which I had direct knowledge, and which closed tragically. Mrs. Winston Burdett, engaging and amazingly energetic young Italian wife of the Columbia Broadcasting System correspondent, an ardent anti-Fascist, was stopped while riding on a road north of Teheran. A gunman confirmed her identity, shot her, and left her to bleed to death in the car which the frightened native chauffeur drove away frantically.

On the credit side of the balance, the Allies were engaged on a constructive program to improve the situation. Given the difficulties and delicacies of their tasks, the Soviet and British authorities seemed to be cooperating unusually well. The Soviet embassy was headed by Andrei Smirnov, former Tass correspondent in Berlin; the British legation by Sir Reader Bullard, a veteran of the diplomatic service. They worked on friendly terms with each other and with the United States minister, Louis G. Dreyfus, Jr., another career diplomat. The military missions cooperated with a familiarity that was startling to one ac-

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customed to the strictly official and formal attitude of the Soviet soldiers at home.

The Allies attempted to fight Axis propaganda with propaganda of their own. The British circulated a mimeographed news bulletin, supplied Reuter's service for the local newspapers, and established a branch of the ministry of information in what had been the 'Brown House' of the German colony, now called 'Victory House.' The inspirations of Victory House were not always fortunate. I witnessed one of these — a Fifi d'Orsay film which could hardly impress the local intellectuals. I was told that, earlier, Victory House had shown Persian guests another film, vaunting the defenses of Singapore, *after* Singapore had fallen.

The Soviet propaganda appeared to be more successful. Tass news seemed to monopolize the newspapers. The hit of the concert season was a jazz band from the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the Persians were flocking to see a Soviet color film, *Rossignol Rossignolet*, and a newsreel of the defeat of the Germans at Moscow. Red army men maintained the correctest of attitudes, either keeping out of sight or preserving complete dignity while in public. British soldiers in battle dress were to be seen in night-clubs and bars.

American culture, by the way, was represented most prominently at this time in the Pars, a shabby night-club where the cast was headed by a Negro tap-dancer, Harry Fleming, and a girl billed as Jeannie-Mae.

A neutral diplomat told me there had been a sharp

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change in popularity of the Russians and British among the Iranians since the entry of the Allied troops. Instead of the pre-war seventy-five per cent to twenty-five per cent in favor of the British, he said, the attitude had now become sixty per cent to forty per cent in favor of the Russians.

This international family of three, Russians, British, and Persians, became four in the spring of 1942. The Poles arrived. The odyssey on which these people had gone east into Siberia, after the 1939 partition of their country, took them south into Iran, to go on from there, they knew not where.

The bases for this movement were the Soviet-Polish Mutual-Assistance Pact of July 30, 1941, signed in London just after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, providing for release of Polish prisoners and formation of a Polish legion in the Soviet Union; and a later agreement, reached by Stalin and General Vladyslav Sikorski in Moscow December 4, 1941, providing that Polish troops should proceed out of the Soviet Union to other Allied fronts.

Late in March, having been freed by the Russians, the Poles started streaming across the Caspian by ship from Krasnovodsk to Pahlevi, and then by truck to the Teheran region. By April 12, the first exodus was completed, 44,000 troops and 11,000 civilian women and children, about 55,000 Poles in all, having come to Iran.

It must have looked like the promised land to them, having come out of the snow and ice of middle Asia

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to the sunlit plateau of Iran under the beautiful Elburz Mountains. But all was not beauty. There was sickness among them at first, about one hundred cases of typhus daily. The men went to barracks in a small-arms factory outside Teheran, but the women were crammed into the former officers' school. A whole forest of tents sprang up, with little food and less sanitation.

The British army took charge of the movement, supplying food and clothing for the evacuees. The Iran ministry of public hygiene worked with the British medical service to combat epidemic. The American Red Cross contributed its aid. Maurice Barber, then the Red Cross delegate, would receive urgent calls for such items as five hundred blankets for the Poles. And he would deliver the goods.

Persians clustered with curiosity around the Polish encampments. Native men squatted on the roads to stare at the foreigners, women peered at them from beneath their veils, and elegant Iranian officers, in pale khaki, wasp-waisted uniforms, rode around the tents on horseback.

General Vladyslav Anders, commander-in-chief of the Polish forces in the Soviet Union, came out with his men. He had been a prisoner with them, held in the Lubianka prison of Moscow, and released after the signing of the Soviet-Polish pact. I saw him sitting on a balcony of the hotel Ferdowsi, his booted legs crossed, gazing dreamily up at the mountains whence he had come. To the south lay the deserts of the middle east, to which he was going.

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The Iranians, who had considered two as company and three as a crowd, felt that four peoples within their country were much too many. They were anxious to have the Poles move on elsewhere. They made representations to the Polish government to this effect, as a suggestion was being considered to keep the Poles in Iran to bolster the Allied forces there. So the Poles continued their odyssey.

A year later, when I visited Teheran again in February, 1943, I found a total of about 110,000 Poles, including 80,000 troops and 30,000 civilians, had been evacuated from the Soviet Union. The movement was ended. The Poles had estimated between 1,200,000 and 2,000,000 of their people were in the Soviet Union, but the Soviet authorities contended no more Polish citizens were left there. No negotiations for a further movement were under way.

The Polish troops had gone to join the British forces of the middle east. Many civilians had been moved to Africa. The rest were awaiting designation of another destination. Mexico was one proposed place, but the British authorities were hesitant about extending the Polish odyssey across the seas. In any case the Poles were no longer any source of annoyance to the Iranians.

In February, 1943, Iran was still in the throes of its cabinet crises. This time, it was Premier Ahmed Ghavam who was attempting to hold power. To do so he proposed no fundamental measures, but a bill to permit deputies of the parliament to become ministers in the cabinet. Just before this crisis there had



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been bread riots in Teheran. I had eaten this bread, and could testify that it was bad — a wheat and barley mixture that ground between the teeth like sand. But bread was not the real cause of the riots. The real cause was politics.

The explanation given in diplomatic circles was that the shah and the army objected to Premier Ghavam, fearing he was attempting to set up a dictatorship, and opposing his plan to place American experts as advisers in the army, national gendarmerie, and Teheran police force. Two of Ghavam's houses were burned by the rioters — but he must have been in on the game, too, for all valuables had been moved away the day before the outbreak. British troops came to Teheran temporarily, the very sight of them promptly restoring order. Ghavam struggled on for a few more days, attempting to rally parliamentary support, but finally gave up as premier, and Iran, once more, sought a government.

By this time, however, a new factor had been added to the situation, and a fifth people had come to join this little league of nations in Iran. The Americans had arrived.

The United States policy, since the entry of Allied troops into Iran, had been to convert Iran 'from an idle appendage to a willing partner' of the United Nations. American experts were now on hand to aid in the reorganization of government ministries, such as that of finances, as well as of the army and police forces. And American troops were there to operate the services of supplies for Russia.

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The United States, in effect, had become the 'honest broker' in dealings among the Persians, British, and Russians. Whatever else might be happening in Iran, the vital supplies of trucks and planes were going through to the Red army.

I was glad to leave Teheran after my first visit there in 1942. I had stocked up with cigarettes, suits, shirts, socks, and shoes, crammed a few lemons and oranges into the corners of my suitcase, and was anxious to get back to work. It was a pleasure to climb into a Soviet plane, fly back into the forbidding climate of the north, and see again those swarms of people, toiling and fighting, with no thoughts of politics, but only of winning the war.

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**T**HE German army came out of its hibernation like a giant snake, wounded, but still venomously dangerous, stirring from its winter sleep with a violent, deadly flick of its armor-scaled tail. It was definitely wounded, for it had suffered a setback that was at first galling for its pride, then gangrenous for its morale, and finally grueling for its actual physical strength. But not mortally so. It survived a hostile Russian winter, something Napoleon had not even dared to try, although in doing so it experienced horrible anguish. But, in its turn, it was still able to deliver another all-but-mortal blow.

During the months of March, April, and May, while the Wehrmacht still lay coiled in its den, I had a rare opportunity, in three long flights, to see the conditions under which it passed the closing period of winter. In March, flying south from Kuibyshev through Baku to Teheran, I saw the land, frozen and still, under

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a vast glacier, extending down to the North Caucasus, which locked all immovably under its surface of ice and snow. A month later, returning through Baku and Astrakhan, over Stalingrad and Saratov to Kuibyshev, I found the snow-line had started to roll north up the Volga steppes, leaving a slimy discharge of mud and slush as difficult and dangerous to traverse as the ice it replaced. Early in May, flying from Kuibyshev to Moscow, I saw the terrain covered with myriad pools and streams, gleaming like a giant jeweler's collection of antique silver, a brilliant spectacle from aloft, but dismal to behold from the ground.

This was a period of anxious waiting and alert watching. The enemy was known to be wounded, but still dangerous. When, where, and how would he strike again? It was also a period of confidence, although not overconfidence. The enemy had been stopped and thrown back once. Could he not be given another, more serious defeat? The people looked for a spring offensive by the Red army as well as by the Wehrmacht.

May 1, 1942, the first May Day of the war, passed in silent suspense. The red flags, the slogans, the portraits of members of the Politburo went up, as always, in every city, town, and village of the Soviet Union, but that was all there was of the once-lavish celebration of international Labor Day. The people, ostensibly at their own request and certainly in their own interests, gave up their holiday, their traditional demonstrations, and spent the day at work. The Red army, instead of parading in the Red Square, stood guard

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on the front. The Soviet Union, having shown the previous November 7 that it could go through its holiday rites, no matter how great the German pressure, if it wanted to, could now afford to dispense with the ceremonies and get on with the war.

Stalin did not speak from the rostrum atop Lenin's tomb that May Day, but he did publish an order, as commissar of defense, giving a message to his people. He took some pains to point out that the Germans were not nationalists and socialists, but imperialists and reactionaries, who must be hated deeply and passionately. He said the only thing lacking to drive out the invader was knowledge of how to exploit fully the weapons placed in the hands of the Red army, and ordered the men to absorb this knowledge. Finally, he ordered the army to 'make 1942 be the year of the final defeat of the German-Fascist troops and the liberation of the land of the Soviets from the Hitlerite scoundrels!'

That, on the face of it, smacked of underestimation of the Germans and overconfidence in the Red army. In the light of history, that order proved to be unfulfillable. But it helped to strengthen the confidence of the Soviet Union in its arms for the coming struggle, and it answered the question that was on everyone's lips — When will the war end? That the answer proved, eight months later, to have been wrong did no harm, for by then there was a reason — the absence of a second front in Europe — and there was then more definite hope that the war might end in 1943.

During the early months of 1942 there was much

speculation over what the 'Spring Fritz,' the German soldier of the coming campaign, would be like. The 'Winter Fritz' had been widely portrayed as a thin, haggard, dirty, red-nosed, blue-lipped fellow with a shawl wrapped around his head, a woman's dress tied around his neck, shivering with cold, hobbling from one foot to the other and scratching himself with one hand after the other. The 'Spring Fritz' turned out, in dispatches from the scenes of preliminary skirmishes, to be a lively young man who hopped around briskly, shouted at the top of his lungs, fired wildly, but sprinted for cover when he came under the orderly fire of the Red army artillery. He seemed to conduct himself generally in a juvenile manner, but he filled in the lines between his predecessor's garrisons as quickly as conditions permitted, made repeated sorties against the Russian lines, and gradually accumulated superior numbers at some points.

Then the snake gave the first real flick of its tail. The crack was heard in Moscow the night of May 11. I had dinner that evening at the Caucasian restaurant, Aragvi, with Maurice Lovell and Harold King, outgoing and incoming correspondents of Reuter's. We walked back to the hotel, cheered by quantities of caviar, crab salad, radishes, lettuce, onions, shashlik, fruit and coffee, vodka, white wine and cognac, and rounded up Walter Kerr and Jim Brown for a poker game. Just then the press department telephoned to say that the communiqué was ready. Was it the same old story, we asked, nothing to report? No, there were some changes. So we went to read it.

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'On the Kerch peninsula,' it said, 'our troops fought hard battles with the enemy who started an offensive.'

The 1942 campaign was on. Actually, it had started three days earlier, May 8, when the Germans launched their attack on Kerch, the northeastern arm of the Crimea. They had chosen their spot cautiously. Kerch was probably the most vulnerable of all the Russian positions. The winter campaign there had not been a complete success. The Red army of the Caucasus had succeeded in crossing the Kerch strait and making a landing, but it lost Feodosia, on its left flank, and failed to take its real objective, Simferopol, in the heart of the Crimea, where it would have relieved the Sebastopol garrison and probably driven the Germans entirely out of the Crimea back to the mainland. Instead, it simply camped on the smaller Kerch peninsula, a threat and a nuisance to the Germans, but itself in an awkward, dangerous position.

The Germans put on their old act of Luftwaffe and Panzer, broke through to Kerch, and drove the Russians back to the Caucasus. They claimed the city and harbor of Kerch May 16. The Russians acknowledged a week later, May 23, that they had evacuated the peninsula. The surprising thing was that this was all the Germans did to open their spring offensive. The break-through at the ten-mile neck of the Kerch peninsula was a far cry from the Nazi conquest of the Balkans in May, 1941, and of France in May and June, 1940. Certainly, the snake was wounded.

Four days after the Germans started their attack on Kerch, the Russians ventured on their own spring

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offensive. They mounted a full-scale assault May 12, with artillery and aviation preparation, tank and infantry advance on the Kharkov front. It was their first experiment in Blitzkrieg, 'Molnienosnaya Voina,' of their own making. It did not have the hoped-for withering effect, but neither was it a flash in the pan.

The offensive started along the winter line that ran about fifty miles east of Kharkov and swung southwest near Krasnograd around the salient formed by the Russians through Lozovaya. The German front line was quickly broken, and the Russians advanced into the densely fortified defense zone. There the enemy resisted stubbornly, brought up reinforcements and counter-attacked. Tank battles developed in which the Germans employed their 21st and 23d armored divisions. These veterans proved a difficult foe for the fledgling Russian lightning warriors.

The Germans, meanwhile, mounted a counter-offensive on the Iziium-Barvenkovo sector, south of Kharkov, striking at the base of the Red army's Lozovaya salient. The battle eddied back and forth tumultuously, with the Russians attacking in the Kharkov front, the Germans in the Iziium-Barvenkovo sector; then the Germans counter-attacking on the Kharkov front, the Russians in the Iziium-Barvenkovo sector.

Much of the flash had been taken out of the German offensive. Cautious pressure was substituted for their once reckless sprints. They counted more heavily on aviation preparation, employing as many as twenty-five bombers at a time against a half-mile stretch of



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front, making as many as a thousand flights a day over single points of importance. They brought out their new fighters, the Messerschmitt 109 F and Focke-Wulf 198. They uncovered also a new anti-tank weapon, a highly mobile 88-millimeter gun, transported on its own wheels, which gave the old panzer team of plane and tank a new running-mate. This was the same gun that caused the British a painful surprise in the western desert of Egypt. A fuller exchange of military information between the Allies might have spared the British and Russians some of the hardships of both having to learn about this gun by bitter experience. It was well known as an anti-aircraft gun in Spain and France. The surprise lay in its conversion primarily into an anti-tank gun, its mass production, and the tactics with which it was employed.

The Russians struggled with their enemy in the Ukraine for two weeks. They obtained experience which was to prove valuable less than a year later in the second winter campaign. They also obtained the obvious advantage of fighting at a time and place chosen by themselves, rather than leave the Germans to select their own ground.

The Sovinformburo summarized the results of the battle, May 30, in a special communiqué. The losses were estimated thus:

German: 90,000 men killed or captured, 540 tanks, up to 200 planes destroyed.

Russian: 5000 dead, 70,000 missing, 300 tanks, 124 planes destroyed.

The communiqué said the objective of the offensive

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was not to take Kharkov, but to divert thirty German divisions of infantry, six divisions of tanks, and a large force of artillery and aviation which had been concentrated opposite Rostov, a city which was proving to be one of the most important — and most difficult to defend — of the war. In this respect some temporary success was gained, for the Rostov sector itself remained quiet, the main German offensive was delayed.

The foreign correspondents were in a position to know that this explanation was not simply an excuse. Throughout the battle the censors eliminated any mention that the offensive was designed to capture Kharkov. This, incidentally, was one value to be derived from Soviet censorship. The blue pencil fell, not only on information which might prove harmful to the Soviet Union, but also on that which the censor knew to be untrue. Some of the best indications of the situation on the front came from a close examination of the censor's work. The dispatches that went out from Moscow told, almost without exception, the truth as it was seen by the correspondents and confirmed by Soviet authorities.

The communiqué's figures told plainly the story of the difficulties the Russians encountered in the first large-scale offensive they undertook without benefit of winter. Seventy thousand men missing meant an entire Russian army lost somewhere in the fields of the Ukraine, its fate unknown. Certainly all those men were not captured, some went to swell the total of dead. For Russian men do not surrender easily.

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The pangs they suffered were not the agony of a defeated, dying army. They were the growing pains of a young army, still to reach maturity. The matériel they lost could certainly have been used in the later desperate defense of the Volga, but the experience they won was valuable. The battle of Kharkov was not one of the bright Russian chapters of the war. After its conclusion, it was rarely mentioned. But one of its graduates, Major-General Vassily Badanov, commander of the twenty-fourth Red army tank corps, was the first to win the order of Suvorov, highest purely military decoration for Soviet officers, in the tank offensive the next winter on the Stalingrad front. He was promoted to Lieutenant-General. His unit became the Second Guards tank corps.

The pace of the spring campaign, meanwhile, quickened. Hardly had the battle of Kharkov died down when the propellers of hundreds of German bombers in southern Russia started turning, their motors roared, and they rumbled down their runways, heavily laden, for Sebastopol.

For seven months, this Black Sea port, last Soviet stronghold in the Crimea, had been under siege. The Germans had tried to storm the citadel the previous November. They lost ten thousand men, and failed. They had tried to bring the city to its knees in December. They lost thirty-five thousand men, and failed. They launched their final offensive June 5. Farther north, another German offensive was announced June 10 to have started on the Kharkov front. In this hard-trampled arena the battle dwindled

again to brief skirmishes. The drama of Sebastopol went its appointed course.

While the German bombers wheeled over the Black Sea, a Soviet bomber traversed the Arctic sky and came down to Moscow. It carried Foreign Commissar Molotov back from Washington and London from a mission as secret as any battle preparation, more important than any single battle. The Russian people learned June 11, by broadcasts over the public loud-speaker systems, the startling news that their foreign commissar had been away for more than two weeks, had signed an alliance in London, and an agreement in Washington. He had already returned to his office.

It seemed that hundreds of persons in London, thousands in Washington, had known about Molotov's visit, but kept their secret well. In Moscow, few had such a responsibility, for only the few Soviet officials directly connected with the trip, the British ambassador and the officer of the British embassy who coded and decoded messages knew about it. We shuddered to think that, if the foreign prophets of Russian doom had been right, he might have flown to Berlin and Rome — and we should have known no more about it until too late.

The Soviet-British treaty, signed May 26 by Molotov and Anthony Eden, was one of the most important documents of the war. It provided for alliance during the war in Europe and for collaboration and mutual assistance after the war. It replaced the July 12, 1941, agreement for joint wartime action. Part I, covering the war period, repeated the previous agreement's

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terms of mutual aid and no separate peace. Part II, valid for twenty years, called for joint action to preserve post-war peace, mutual aid in case either were again attacked, cooperation to organize security and prosperity, and exchange of economic assistance.

The foundation for a future peace was laid in article 2, 'The high contracting parties declare their desire to unite with other like-minded states in adopting proposals for common action to preserve peace and resist aggression in the post-war period'; and in article 5, establishing the principles of 'not seeking territorial aggrandizement for themselves and of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states.'

The communiqué on the London conversations expressed confidence that 'the treaty will be a new and powerful weapon in the struggle against Hitlerite Germany and her associates in Europe until complete victory is won, and will insure close collaboration between the two countries after the victorious war.'

The Washington communiqué said measures were discussed for increasing and quickening shipment of arms to the Soviet Union, and common views were expressed on post-war cooperation for peace and security.

Both communiqués contained a phrase that was to become historic: In London, 'full understanding was reached,' and in Washington, 'complete agreement was reached' — 'with regard to the urgent task of creating a second front in Europe in 1942.' That phrase became the subject of bitter public debate and

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of sharp international suspicion that threatened to undermine the entire allied relationships. It was the cause of further anxious negotiations. It was explained away finally as an undertaking to try to open a second front, not a formal promise to do so, for the difficulties were great, particularly in shipping, and there could be no second front in 1942.

The hard feelings had not yet arisen when Molotov returned to Moscow. Of all he had done, that phrase about the second front was to the Russian people the most important, the news which they had awaited anxiously and now welcomed joyously. A call went out to all corners of the Soviet Union, and the deputies started flying to Moscow from all the sixteen republics for the first wartime session of the Supreme Soviet to ratify the Soviet-British treaty.

That, also, was supposed to be a secret, but the exotic Oriental robes, the bright skull caps, the gay embroidered frocks, the shining decorations, big as tin plates, on the delegates from middle Asia, Siberia, and European Russia, could not be concealed in the somber corridors of the Hôtel Métropole where they stayed.

The deputies trooped across Sverdlov Square past the Alexandrov Garden, fragrant with the odor of freshly cut grass, the warm afternoon of June 18, to the Borovitskaya Gate of the Kremlin, past five successive pass-control points. The camouflage net over the façade of the Great Palace, stirred by the gentle spring wind, waved a welcome. Men in uniform stood in line under the palace staircase to check their pistols,

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then rode up with the others in the electric elevators to the council chamber.

Stalin came through the door in the brown-stained wood panels behind the rostrum promptly at 6 P.M. The deputies spotted immediately his plain gray tunic and rose to greet him with a roar. For three minutes they cheered, until a bell cut short the ovation. Stalin sat with Kalinin and Malenkov in the Politburo box to the right, behind the speaker's stand. Voroshilov, in field uniform, Beria, Mikoyan, Kaganovich, and Shcherbakov sat behind him. Zhdanov, just in from Leningrad, arrived late, leaned over to shake hands cheerfully with Stalin, and took a seat near-by. Molotov, wearing a blue business suit, took the rostrum.

'Comrade Deputies,' he said in his plain-spoken way, 'the government has deemed it necessary to submit the Anglo-Soviet treaty, concluded on May 26 in London, to the Supreme Soviet for consideration and ratification. This is done in view of the great political importance of this treaty.'

He went on to outline its terms. The deputies, who knew it all by heart, listened impassively. Stalin turned to exchange a joke and a smile, from time to time, with Kalinin. There was one extremely interested spectator — Japanese Ambassador Naotake Sato. Invitations had gone out that afternoon, according to protocol, to the chiefs of diplomatic missions present in Moscow. The result was that Admiral Standley, who was in Kuibyshev, was not present. British Ambassador Clark Kerr, who had come to Moscow

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for ratification of the treaty, occupied the first box on the right wall of the council chamber. The second was occupied by Sato, who had come to Moscow on other business, not made known to the Allies, and had the unusual privilege of watching the country to which he was accredited ratify an alliance with the country with which his people were at war. He apparently did not enjoy the privilege, for after listening three hours to the proceedings, he left at 9 P.M., before the ratification was completed.

The assembly stirred to attention as Molotov reached his interpretation of the treaty. They listened keenly as he came to the question of the second front. They burst into applause after he recited the already famous phrase of the London and Washington communiqués, and asserted: 'Such a declaration has great importance for the peoples of the Soviet Union, since the creation of a second front in Europe will create insuperable difficulties for the Hitlerite armies on our front. Let us hope that our common enemy will soon experience to his cost the results of the steadily growing military collaboration of the three great powers.'

Molotov concluded by declaring that victory over Germany was growing nearer and requesting ratification of the treaty with Great Britain. Deputies followed him to the stand to endorse his report. Notable among them were three, Justas Paleckis, V. T. Lacis, and I. J. Vares of the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian Soviet Socialist Republics. If the Soviet Union was agreeing not to interfere in the affairs of



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other nations, it was also writing into the record that the affairs of the Baltic States were Soviet. The procession of deputies ended, as Stalin and Molotov were already poring together over notes on other matters. A formal motion of ratification was introduced, adopted by an unbroken show of uplifted hands, and the session closed at 9.35 P.M. with another ovation for Stalin. He stood for a moment, beaming benevolently and clapping hands with the deputies, then hurried out to his night's work.

There was much to be done, for the agony of Sebastopol was growing acute and the pains were being felt farther north in the Ukraine.

The battle of Sebastopol was being fought on storied ground. The French-British siege of 1854-55, which resulted temporarily in their occupation of Sebastopol, but which ended finally, as any such siege must end, in the return of the Russians, produced Tennyson's 'The Charge of the Light Brigade,' immortalizing the ride of the British across the plain of near-by Balaklava. It produced also the French general's remark, 'C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre.' The German siege of Sebastopol produced equally magnificent feats of arms, but no great poem, no classic wise-crack followed it immediately.

Very few men of letters were permitted to witness the battle. Some local reporters sent out dispatches. One or two Soviet correspondents, no foreign correspondents, reached the scene. For the most part the battle was a private affair among military men. Most of the accounts of it were labored descriptions by

soldiers and sailors who took part in the action. Six months after the siege ended, the best of these accounts were collected in a booklet, 'The Heroic Defense of Sebastopol.' They were not inspired, but they did make something of a pattern out of the confusing whirl of that ghastly, yet glorious struggle.

Its origin dated back to September, 1941, when the Germans raced across the Ukraine and reached the Isthmus of Perekop, gateway to the Crimea. There, the travail of the defenders of Sebastopol began. The 7th brigade of marines, formed of sailors from the battleship *Paris Commune*, the cruiser *Krasny Krim*, and other vessels of the Black Sea fleet, went into action September 30, at Perekop, and gained its first success, throwing the Germans back six miles from Ishuna to Armyansk. For a month it held the front, finally falling back under superior enemy numbers, fire and bombs, through Knyazhevichi and Temesh to Simferopol. Avoiding Simferopol, the Germans swung to the west into the Alma valley, outflanking the brigade. The marines, nevertheless, forced their way through the valley, over the mountainous tracks from Simferopol to Yalta, and entrenched on the Mackenzie Heights, near Sebastopol, for their greatest battle.

The defenses of Sebastopol, a naval base, were being turned around, meanwhile, to face the land foe. Heavy long-range coastal batteries were reversed, their long muzzles pointing out of new apertures in their concrete shelters, away from the sea. They formed the backbone of the defense. Pillboxes, blockhouses, and anti-tank obstacles were erected at the rear ap-

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proaches to the port. Warships of the fleet, the maritime army, more special marine brigades, Red army and Red air force units manned the defenses.

The Germans raced up to the approaches of Sebastopol early in November, hoping to take the city from the march. There they had their first shock. The big coastal batteries began to fire on them November 7, blasting their mobile columns of motorized infantry, cavalry, tanks, and trench-mortar batteries. They tried to storm the city from November 8 to 17, only to find their light forces, drained by ten thousand casualties, were insufficient for the task. They dug in on a semicircle from Kacha to Balaklava.

The second offensive against Sebastopol began December 17 with a bl aze of artillery fire, followed by assaults on the steep Fedukhin Heights, the Italian cemetery, and Bezimennaya Hill, which had been battlefields in the first siege of Sebastopol. Six enemy divisions, including the Antei division of Rumanians and German S.S. troops, pressed the attack. They approached the Mackenzie Heights by December 21, and made their supreme effort December 24, only to be repulsed. They tried once more New Year's Eve, failed, and abandoned the offensive for the winter, with thirty-five thousand casualties.

A grim, ruthless, heavy-handed force came up for the final offensive. The best German air corps, the 8th, came first, starting its bombings May 20, and intensifying them steadily, until, by June 2, it was making nearly a thousand flights daily, dropping twenty-five hundred to six thousand bombs each day.

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The siege guns went into action June 2, including mighty 24-inch monsters, which hurled thirty-seven thousand shells during the first two days of the combined artillery-aviation assault. Finally, on June 5, came the charge of the ground forces.

These were the German 22d, 24th, 28th, 50th, 72d, 132d, and 170th infantry divisions, the Rumanian 1st and 18th divisions and the German 18th tank group, under General Fritz Erich von Mannstein, a total of three hundred thousand men, more than four hundred tanks, and about nine hundred planes.

The defenders of Sebastopol by this time had lost a valuable ally, the Red fleet. The circle around the city had grown so small that there was room inside it only for a few fighters and attack bombers, not enough to protect the warships. The big vessels, whose guns had helped to repulse the first two offensives, were unable to lend their full support during the third. It was up to the men on land, alone, to save Sebastopol or die.

The Germans apparently thought they had already died under the terrible blast of their bombs and shells. Evidence was found that the Nazi command expected to take Sebastopol in three days. But when the enemy troops charged across the bomb-and-shell-pitted approaches to the port, the land came suddenly to life, as though sown with dragons' teeth, and a desperate battle was engaged.

Outnumbered by five to one, the defenders held on for twenty-seven days, doing all that flesh and blood could do. The individual heroes were legion. First in importance was Vice-Admiral F. Oktyabrsky, com-

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mander of the Black Sea fleet, who led the Sebastopol land, sea, and air forces. He stayed in the city as long as it could be held, then moved his headquarters to a lighthouse to supervise the evacuation, going out among the last. Next in charge was Major-General I. I. Petrov, who stroked his long silky mustache constantly, imperturbably, amid bombs and shells, and directed the ground forces. Under them were men and women, their equals in valor if not in rank. There were the five seamen, Nikolai Filchenko, Vassily Tsibulko, Yuri Parshin, Ivan Krasnoselsky, and Daniel Odintsov, who emulated the deed of the twenty-eight on the Moscow front, by tying hand-grenades to their belts, leaping under an advancing enemy tank column, and blowing the tanks — and themselves — to pieces. There was Sergeant Ludmilla Pavlichenko, who stalked the enemy with an implacable hatred, picked off three hundred and nine of them with her sniper's rifle. There were the nameless civilians who lived and worked in the underground vaults under the chalky cliffs, producing the munitions for those who fought above, and treating those who came down, wounded.

The time came when they could do no more. The flag of Sebastopol was lowered the night of July 2. The next evening the Soviet Information Bureau announced: 'After eight months of heroic defense, our troops withdrew from Sebastopol.'

For the Germans, who paraded past the bodies of their dead comrades into the ruins of a dead city, it was a Pyrrhic victory. During the last twenty-five days of the siege, the Sovinformburo estimated, they

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suffered 150,000 casualties, at least 60,000 of them killed, and lost more than 250 tanks, and more than 300 planes. Russian losses from June 7 to July 3 were estimated at 11,385 dead, 21,099 wounded, 8300 missing, 30 tanks, 300 guns, and 77 planes. That was probably all the tanks, guns, and planes they had. Throughout the siege the Germans had lost 300,000 killed and wounded. Most important of all they had lost time.

The Soviet communiqué said:

The military and political importance of the Sebastopol defense in the patriotic war of the Soviet people is tremendous. By diverting and holding the large German and Rumanian forces, the defenders of the city baffled and thwarted the plans of the German command. The iron fortitude of the Sebastopolites is one of the most important reasons for the collapse of the vaunted 'spring offensive' of the Germans.

But now the offensive was on in full cry. It was late, for the first major effort, starting from Kharkov again June 22, a year to the day after the invasion was launched, faltered after forcing the Red army out of Kupiansk, to the southeast. It was smaller, for this time it was confined to a single Russian front, the southwest, instead of encompassing them all. But it was still immensely powerful. It stabbed, like an insistently prodding finger, farther north, from Kursk, then from Belgorod, between Kharkov and Kursk, and finally broke its way into the open. Three days after the funereal announcement of the fall of Sebastopol came another, more disturbing communiqué July 6, reporting fighting west of Voronezh.

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Like wildfire the German offensive spread south-east from Voronezh... Rossosh... Kantemirovka... Lisichansk... Boguchar... Millerovo... Voroshilovgrad...

'Where are they going, to Rostov or Stalingrad?' was the question on everyone's lips in Moscow. The answer was... both.

The procession went on... Tsimlianskaya... Novo-cherkassk... Rostov in the south... Kleitskaya... Kotelnikovo in the east.

Rostov and Novocherkassk, just to the north, were disappointments after Sebastopol. *Red Star*, newspaper of the Red army, said so plainly:

We have everything necessary at the walls of every city and the approaches of every village to grind down the Fascist forces, stop the movement of the enemy, and finally defeat him. All these possibilities existed during the defense of Novocherkassk and the German advance on Rostov, but they were not fully utilized. Individual cowards and panic-mongers ran away from the battlefield. The leaders did not have the necessary firmness to deal properly, in due time, with cowards and waverers. Novocherkassk and Rostov, which were ready for long, unwavering defense, have been captured by the enemy.

By now the Germans were overrunning also the North Caucasus... Armavir... Krasnodar... Maikop... Mineralny Vodi... Piatigorsk...

On August 23, the Soviet communiqué said, the battles centered around Kleitskaya and Kotelnikovo, northwest and southwest of Stalingrad, and around Piatigorsk and south of Krasnodar, in the eastern and

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western Caucasus. On that day the Germans claimed they crossed the Don and rushed on Stalingrad.

The position was deceptive. The principal German objectives appeared to be the waterline of the Volga and the oil fields of Baku. Actually, information in the possession of the Soviet command, including the disposition of the main German forces, showed these were only secondary objectives for 1942. The main one was Moscow.

Their strongest forces were concentrated, not in the south, but in the Orel and Stalingrad regions. Their rush south was designed to draw the Russian reserves there. Then the Germans planned to strike east, isolate Moscow from the Volga and Urals, encircle and occupy the capital, and end the war.

Again, as at Moscow, the Germans had attempted 'too much, too soon.' For now they had come to the city named for Stalin.

The greatest battle of them all in 1942 was under way. But while it was being fought, another was looming, the inter-Allied battle of the second front. This political encounter paralleled the military, with its equally black moments, before it ended as happily as did the battle of Stalingrad. But then no one could know what the end would be. We knew only that Winston Churchill was on his way to Moscow.



## Churchill vs. Stalin

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WINSTON CHURCHILL and Joseph Stalin were antagonists of old. Churchill, in his book, 'The Unknown War (The Eastern Front),' published in 1931, called the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution a 'long, swift, splintering, crashing descent which ended, as it could only end, in the abyss. . . . All fell headlong into the depths where Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and other unnatural spirits awaited their prey.' Among the 'other unnatural spirits,' of course, he meant Stalin. What Stalin thought of Churchill, before they became allies, has never been published. It probably could not be printed.

When Germany forced the Soviet Union and Great Britain into alliance, Churchill and Stalin made the best they could of it, with as much good grace as they could command. Churchill, particularly, made several mentions of letting bygones be bygones, as in his telegram to Stalin, after Molotov's visit to

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London, in which he asserted, 'We have done a great deal toward beating down the barrier between our two countries.'

Still, there remained the natural antagonism between two dominant personalities differing in background, political views, and character — one, scion of British aristocracy, the other, son of a poor Georgian family; one, World-War first lord of the admiralty, the other, Bolshevik conspirator against the imperial allies; one, prime minister of conservative Great Britain, the other, chairman of the council of commissars of revolutionary Russia; one, a brilliant orator, *littérateur*, and actor, the other, plain-spoken and unaffected.

Their meeting in Moscow, from August 12 to 15, 1942, therefore, ranked with the great encounters of strong men of all times. It rivaled all the Battles of the Centuries, from David *vs.* Goliath to Dempsey *vs.* Tunney. That the world did not know it was taking place until it was all over was the world's loss in suspense, excitement, and drama. For months afterward, however, the clash continued, like a sort of long-range political artillery duel between Moscow and London.

The issue was the second front. The situation, as it was generally understood in Moscow, was this: the British and Americans agreed, during Molotov's visit to London and Washington, on the 'urgent tasks of creating a second front in Europe in 1942.' President Roosevelt was willing. Churchill, however, turned against it. The President was placed in the position of

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not being able to go ahead alone with a plan which was definitely opposed by the leader of his main associated power. The second front was off for 1942.

The Soviet people's understanding of the situation and their attitude toward it were indicated by the jokes then going the rounds. They were not so much funny as they were significant as evidence of public opinion. One was this:

God, in his heaven, became annoyed with the noise of battle rising from the earth, and sent Saint Peter to bring before him the person responsible for the row. Stalin was produced.

'It's not my fault,' said Stalin. 'Can I help it if I was attacked? It's that man Hitler.'

So Hitler was produced.

'Who, me?' said Hitler. 'I didn't start it, the British declared war. It's that man Churchill.'

Churchill appeared.

'But you can't possibly blame me,' said Churchill. 'Just look down. You won't see a single Englishman fighting anywhere.'

A few months later, when the British 8th army won its magnificent victory in the western desert of Egypt, this one passed out of circulation.

Another story was of a soothsayer's reply to the question: How could the second front be started? 'There are two possible ways,' it went, 'the natural and the supernatural. The natural way would be for Gabriel and a lot of Angels to descend and start it, the supernatural way would be for the British to start it.'

One that was told nightly on the stage of a Moscow

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theater ran this way: 'It's too bad that all the clocks in the world don't read the same, instead of having time differences.' 'What time differences?' 'Well, for example, the clocks in Moscow are saying "Now!" And the clocks in London are saying "Not yet."'

That being the situation, British Ambassador Clark Kerr suggested Churchill should come to Moscow to talk with Stalin. He felt that good would come of personal acquaintance between the two leaders. Churchill made known his willingness to undertake the trip, as he put it, 'to express myself.' Stalin promptly extended an invitation to him, and the die was cast.

I was sitting in my living room at 4.30 P.M., August 12, talking with Robert Magidoff, when a roar penetrated the thin roof. We looked into the pale blue sky, where a light breeze was chasing white clouds illuminated by a bright sun, and saw three great, four-motored, fan-tailed American B-24 bombers pass overhead and coast to a landing at the central airport. Above them, so high they could hardly be seen, dipped an escort of Soviet fighters. It was Churchill, arriving with his party.

His coming had been kept generally secret. The correspondents, however, had known of it for days. Clark Kerr had locked himself in his embassy, declining to see anyone. Travelers from Teheran reported hectic preparations among the British there for an important reception. Others said a Soviet guard of honor had been sent out to the Kuibyshev airport, only to be told to return another day. In

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Moscow, special guards were detailed to the airport. The National Hotel was roped off and the sidewalk in front of it carpeted. The wall of the foreign office guest-house was given a fresh coat of black paint and supplies were carried into its yard. All that, for us, added up to a visit by Churchill.

Some of the correspondents saw the Prime Minister riding away from the airport. Even if they had not recognized him, his cigar, a rarity in Moscow, was enough to identify him. Others telephoned the British embassy and asked whether they could see Churchill's secretary. A slow-witted clerk said, 'Just a moment, please, I'll ask him,' and then returned, chastened, to say, 'I don't know anything about him.' We handed telegrams in to the press department, saying Churchill had arrived, and received the same answer: 'Nothing is known about it.' So the battle was on, and we could not describe it. Churchill, officially, was not in Moscow.

What happened, that first day, was this: three quarters of the party flew in from Teheran without mishap, while a fourth plane carrying General Sir Archibald Wavell, chief of the British forces in India, and several other officers, turned back with a bad motor. They came in a day later. At the airport the visitors were met by a delegation of Soviet officials, with Molotov at their head. The flags of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States snapped from the flagpoles. A military band played the three national anthems. A guard of honor, composed of men chosen specially for their height, not to be out-

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done by the Buckingham Palace guards, stood at attention. They wore field kit and steel helmets, instead of bearskin hats and scarlet coats.

Churchill inspected the guard, and then spoke into a microphone for the newsreels. 'We are determined that we will continue hand in hand, whatever our suffering, whatever our toils,' he said. 'We will continue hand in hand, like comrades and brothers, until every vestige of the Nazi régime has been beaten into the ground, until the memory only of it remains as an example and a warning for future times.'

Averell Harriman, who came with Churchill as President Roosevelt's personal representative, also spoke briefly: 'The President of the United States charged me to accompany the British Prime Minister on his eventful journey to Moscow at this crucial moment of the war. The President of the United States stands back of everything that Mr. Churchill has come to do here, and America will be fighting with the Russians hand in hand at the front.'

Churchill gave his famous 'V' for victory sign and turned away to his automobile. Behind him there was excited speculation over two subjects. One was Harriman's reference to America fighting with the Russians at the front. The other was Churchill's V sign. Most Russians who saw it thought the two fingers meant there would be two fronts. The word for victory, in Russian, is pobeda. He should have given the P sign in Moscow.

Churchill talked with Stalin for three hours and forty minutes at the Kremlin the evening of August 12.

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He conferred with Molotov the next afternoon and again with Stalin the next evening. What was said behind the closed doors, those on the inside would not say, those on the outside could not pretend to know.

It was natural to assume, however, that the principal subjects were those the whole world was then discussing: the German surge across the Don, east toward Stalingrad, south toward the Caucasus; and Russian anxiety over the second front. It was easy, also, to see the way the talks were going, from such indications as a conversation between two Englishmen which took place in my presence. 'It's really too bad they brought the old gentleman out here,' said one who was no youth himself. 'It's not going so well, is it?' said the other. 'The old boy's in a foul temper.'

On the second evening of the visit, the American correspondents were invited by Harriman to come at 7.45 P.M. to the white-tiled foreign commissariat guest-house where he was staying, on the same street as my apartment. Although I had passed it countless times, it was my first venture into that house. Small and unpretentious, it was nevertheless an historic building. There stayed the British-French mission in August, 1939, while Ribbentrop, next door in the old Austrian legation, arranged the Soviet-German non-aggression pact. There stayed the Finns, Balts, and Turks, when they came for talks at the Kremlin. There stayed Harriman, while Churchill lived in the British embassy dacha at Perlovka, twelve miles outside Moscow.

The house was decorated in a plantation style,

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strange and exotic for Moscow. A huge palm stood in the front hall. To the left was a sitting room and to the rear a dining room, both with light wooden chairs and tables, still-life paintings, and inverted lighting. Smart service was offered by a Soviet staff.

We sat with Harriman around a wicker table in the living room, where he told us he was not really in Moscow, any more than Churchill, but that he wanted to see his friends of a year back, when he had come with Lord Beaverbrook for the supply conference. Harriman looked a little older, stouter and more tired, but much more congenial, than a year before, when his remark that we were 'the meekest bunch of correspondents' he had ever seen did not go down so well.

He told us very little about the current conversations, instead questioning us closely and shrewdly about our ideas of the military, political, and economic situation. We did gain a definite impression, however, that the visit was entirely 'Churchill's party,' and that Harriman had come more to lend President Roosevelt's moral support than to take part in any three-power negotiations. We also gathered that a second front in Europe was still a remote possibility, from a casual question which was raised: Weren't the American attacks on the Solomon Islands already creating a second front in effect by drawing the Japanese away from a possible invasion of Siberia? Perhaps they were, but that was not what the Russians wanted, expected, and awaited.

On the third evening, there was a Kremlin dinner,



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the most animated ever held in this series of traditional endings to official visits. Nearly one hundred guests, members of the British and United States missions in Moscow and highest Soviet leaders, trooped into the Catherine Hall of the Great Palace at 9 P.M. for the spectacle. No reporters were present. It was unfortunate some were not there, for a first-hand account of the proceedings would have contributed a precious lot to an understanding of the characters of Churchill and Stalin, of Soviet-British relations, and of the current political and economic situation. Some idea of the events, however, we gathered later from the guests.

Stalin sat in the center of the long main table with Churchill on his right and Harriman on his left. Beside each of the guests of honor sat an interpreter. Across the table was Molotov, with Clark Kerr on his right and Admiral Standley on his left.

There was a sensation at the very start when Churchill entered, wearing blue overalls with a zipper front, open at the neck and with no tie. It was the first time he had appeared in Moscow in this costume. It may have been the same costume which was admired in Washington, but not in Moscow; it was no success, particularly at a Kremlin dinner which the Russians, so informal on some occasions but so formal on others, consider as a great state occasion. No one asked the Prime Minister for an explanation of his attire, and he offered none. One Russian guest, who could not contain his curiosity, however, leaned over and asked a British general confidentially whether

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that was the kind of suit worn by British parachutists during commando raids on France.

'It would serve as such,' said the general.

Forty-three dishes were heaped on the main table, between the columns of the former ballroom of Catherine the Great, and on the two small tables which held the overflow of guests. The menu was magnificent:

Fresh and pressed caviar, white Balik, salmon, garnished herring, and shamaya, a smoked fish from the lower Don.

Cold ham, *pâté de foie gras*, cold game with mayonnaise, cold duck.

Sturgeon prepared with jelly and pickles, tomato salad, vegetable salad, cucumbers, tomatoes, radishes, Caucasian pickles, cheese, butter, toast, fish-stuffed pastry, rolls.

White mushrooms, served hot with sour cream, game minced with herring and potatoes, squash *meunière*.

Cream chicken soup, *consommé*, and clear beet soup. Sterlet cooked in champagne.

Turkey, chicken, and hazel grouse, spring lamb with potatoes.

Cucumber salad, cauliflower, asparagus.

Ice cream, sherbet, liqueurs, coffee, *petits fours*, and roasted almonds.

Mixed with the meal were countless toasts. The first was by Stalin, the usual salutation to his guests. Molotov proposed a toast to President Roosevelt, to which Churchill responded with a booming 'To the President,' which could be heard all over the hall. Admiral Standley offered a libation to the union of Great Britain, the United States, and Russia. General

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Wavell made a brief speech in fluent, precise Russian. As the party warmed up, Stalin appeared to be growing higher, Churchill lower, in spirits.

There was a difficult moment when Clark Kerr proposed a toast to Stalin. Everyone rose to drink — except Churchill. Squatting heavily in his chair, he muttered across to his envoy, something to this effect: 'Haven't you been in the diplomatic service long enough to know an ambassador addresses his words to the foreign minister of the country to which he is accredited?' An interpreter, meanwhile, was translating Clark Kerr's words. The ambassador's usually ruddy face flushed an even deeper red. When the translation was finished, he turned quickly to Molotov and spoke a few more polite words. Those were translated, and everyone — including Churchill, who then rose — drank the toast.

Stalin, by now, was in peak form. He stood, with a smile, and said something like this:

'I should like to propose a toast that no one can answer. It is to intelligence officers. They cannot answer, because no one knows who they are, but their work is important.'

He went on to say he had been reading up on this subject, and recalled an incident which occurred during what he called the 'Gibraltar' campaign of the last war. He evidently meant the 'Gallipoli' campaign, a sore spot for Churchill, who then was first lord of the admiralty when the Allies failed to take the Dardanelles. Stalin pointed out the campaign was virtually won, but because of flaws in their intelligence work,

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the British did not realize or follow up their advantage, and so failed.

That was the most awkward moment of the meal. Stalin's toast could be taken to mean all sorts of things — that Allied intelligence officers were now working, unknown, virtually as spies, in the Soviet Union; that, as they had in the last war, they were again making mistakes. It was a direct gibe at Churchill.

Captain Jack Duncan, the United States naval attaché, a swashbuckling sailor from Springfield, Missouri, who was never fazed by any little thing like a toast, saved the situation. He rose and said:

'I can answer that toast to intelligence officers, because I'm one of them. If we make mistakes, it is because we know only what you tell us — and that's not much.'

Stalin roared with laughter, and called down the table, 'If there's anything you want to know, ask me. I'll be your intelligence officer.'

Stalin left his seat, walked to Duncan's and drank a personal toast to him. And when the dinner broke up about 1 A.M., Stalin and Duncan walked out of the room together, arm in arm.

The next afternoon there was the usual Saturday matinee movie at Spaso House, showing James Cagney in 'Every Dawn I Die,' a gangster film on which a near-eastern diplomat commented, 'How typical that must be of American life.' During the show a call came for the correspondents: Prime Minister Churchill

## MOSCOW DATELINE

would see them at 6 P.M. at Sary Dom, the 'old house,' or former British consulate-general, which served as Churchill's headquarters. We walked that mile gleefully, for we had tried in vain to see the Prime Minister, and we lined up expectantly around the dark-paneled dining room of the Sary Dom.

Another British official entered, shut the glass doors gently behind him, bade us be seated around the dinner table, coughed apologetically and said: 'I am sorry, the Prime Minister will not see you.' We had heard the Prime Minister was allergic to the press, but had not expected to be called to a conference, and then disappointed. The reason for it, the official explained, was that the Prime Minister never received the press in London, reporting only to the House of Commons, and that if he talked with us, he would have to speak to the correspondents in Cairo. We felt no better several days later, upon hearing the Prime Minister had held a press conference for a hundred correspondents — in Cairo.

In the meantime, the lesser official offered his version of the Churchill-Stalin conversations. He called them 'epoch-making.' The two men, he said, showed great strength and no restraint, talked over war problems, signed no formal pact, but reached a general agreement. Asked whether the meeting could be called a success, he reflected for a moment, and then replied: 'I think so.'

The communiqué had already been written:

A number of decisions were reached covering the field of the war against Hitlerite Germany and her as-

## CHURCHILL VS. STALIN

sociates in Europe. This just war of liberation both governments are determined to carry on with all their power and energy until the complete destruction of Hitlerism and any similar tyranny has been achieved.

The discussions which were carried on in an atmosphere of cordiality and complete sincerity provided an opportunity of reaffirming the existence of close friendship and understanding between the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States of America, in entire accordance with the allied relations existing between them.

That did not mean very much. It did not include the ritual phrase about 'common agreement on all problems,' usual on such occasions. That evening, however, after the communiqué was written, Churchill went back to the Kremlin for a final talk with Stalin. It was so private that not even Harriman was present. The two leaders talked until dawn. If anything concrete was accomplished, it was done then. Churchill went from the Kremlin to the airport, and took off in a gloomy, early-morning mist.

Two days after the departure, when Churchill had reached Cairo safely, the communiqué was published. With it was issued a telegram from Churchill to Stalin: 'I take the opportunity of thanking you for your comradely attitude and hospitality. I am very pleased to have visited Moscow, firstly because it was my duty to express myself and secondly, because I am certain that our contact will contribute usefully to our cause. Please convey my kind regards to Mr. Molotov.' No reply from Stalin to Churchill was published.

On the day Churchill left, however, *Pravda* gave

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him a sort of going-away present — a cartoon showing a few tin sheets raised on the western European shore, facing the English Channel, and behind them a phonograph, chanting: 'Don't come here. These fortifications are impregnable.' The official editorials harped on the fact that Russia was fighting alone — and urged the Allies on to 'active operations.'

Churchill had come, and after crossing swords with Stalin, had gone. Churchill, in Cairo, was reported to have referred to Stalin as 'that monster.' So persistent did this report become that it got back to Churchill, and he wired his Moscow embassy: 'It is a silly lie.'

The official British view was that two strong men had met and clashed, but parted in mutual respect. This was supported by Stalin himself the following November 6, when he termed Churchill's visit 'important,' and said, 'Complete mutual understanding was reached between the leaders of the two countries.' But, meanwhile, the duel went on over the second front.

## Willkie and Stalin

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Moscow was a buyers' market in the autumn of 1942. The Soviets were selling the second front 1942, preferred. So when Wendell Willkie came as personal representative of President Roosevelt, seeking precisely second-front stock, locked doors flew open, frozen faces melted into smiles, and the Kremlin gave him the warmest welcome it had extended to a foreigner in many a moon.

In contrast to Prime Minister Churchill's visit, Willkie's was one of back-slapping goodfellowship and closed in complete accord. But Churchill was the one who directed the destinies of one of Russia's great allies, while Willkie was only a leader of the opposition in the other.

Willkie's visit to Russia, in September, could have no immediate, specific effect on the conduct of the war, since he was not in a position to make any official decisions, but it formed a remarkable chapter in the



## MOSCOW DATELINE

history of that period. It showed the Soviet desire for understanding and friendship, and it opened a new period of public pressure on the Allies to create a second front.

From that moment on, the second-front issue was taken out of the private council chambers of the Allied governments and thrown into the arena of public debate. Whether that move was wise could only be determined by subsequent events. It certainly was frowned on, at the time, by responsible leaders of Great Britain and the United States.

The popular success of Willkie's visit was not instantaneous. It, like Topsy, sort of grew.

When he arrived at Kuibyshev from Teheran in his big Cargo-converted B-24, called 'Gulliver,' he was met by a small Soviet delegation, headed only by Lozovsky, who was several rungs down on the ladder of vice-commissars. He had to go to call on Vyshinsky, first vice-commissar for foreign affairs, and chief of the Soviet administration for the diplomatic corps there.

Until his arrival, Willkie's plans were uncertain. The correspondents in Moscow had hoped and expected he would come immediately to the capital. Instead, he stayed three days in Kuibyshev. Such a visit, without benefit of press coverage, we considered definitely a miscarriage. Speculation arose as to whether some dark plot was under way to keep the trip out of the headlines. That was the kind of suspicion easily bred in the cold, wet, heavy autumn atmosphere of Moscow.

## WILLKIE AND STALIN

Actually, his visit was reported adequately by local correspondents in Kuibyshev, and, to say the least, it was a gala occasion for the foreign colony and Soviet official refugees, isolated in that provincial town on the Volga. He was guest of honor at a reception by Admiral Standley the first evening, a dinner by the Chinese embassy the second, and a dinner by Vyshinsky the third. He dashed out of the Chinese dinner early to see Tchaikovsky's ballet, 'Swan Lake,' favorite performance of the diplomatic corps, at the Bolshoi Theater, with Irina Tikhomirova dancing the lead. He climbed out of his box, leaped over the pit to the stage, just clearing a bass drum, and presented the star with a bouquet of flowers — a sight that had not been seen for years in Russia.

This gallant gesture was not so easy to perform as it seemed. The idea was conceived by Edward Page, third secretary of the American embassy, who recalled the hit Ribbentrop had made in 1939 by presenting flowers to Olga Lepeshinskaya at a performance of the same ballet. It was prepared by Maurice Seltzer, Soviet handy-man for the embassy, who obtained the flowers by the process of climbing over a wall into the Intourist garden and picking them. It was carried out, with a considerable amount of athletic effort, by Willkie.

Days, Willkie hustled around to factories and farms. His last day in Kuibyshev was particularly notable. He steamed up the Volga, with an impressive escort of American and British officials, generals, and bodyguards, to visit a sovhoz, or state farm. They had two

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meals on the way up, one at the farm and two on the way back, between which Willkie talked to the farmers about their work and the war. They steamed down the Volga again, just in time for Vyshinsky's farewell dinner.

Willkie arrived at the Moscow airport September 20 in his plane. Behind him came the B-24 bomber of General Follet Bradley, bringing the embassy staff. There was a drizzling rain, but the flags were flying, and a good Soviet turn-out was on hand, including Oumansky, former ambassador to Washington, and Dekanozov, former ambassador to Berlin and vice-commissar for foreign affairs. The visit, plainly, was already a success.

Willkie drove directly to the foreign commissariat guest-house, where Averell Harriman had stayed a month before during Churchill's visit. The correspondents followed him, and he held an informal conference immediately.

The most important thing he had to say was that he had purposely sought for some sign of relaxation of the Russian war effort, for some indication the Soviets might give up, and he had found none. He also seemed impressed with the efficiency of Soviet workers he had seen, and with the number of questions they asked about the second front. He declined to give his own opinion on the second-front question, on the grounds that it was not wise for a civilian, without knowledge of the military situation, to comment on it. That attitude, he was to change before leaving Moscow.

He wanted to emphasize the Soviet attitude toward

## WILLKIE AND STALIN

the war. 'I deliberately searched for any sign of giving up, and I couldn't find any,' he insisted. 'I could find no signs or indications of weakening of the spirit of this country. I found nothing to indicate there has been the slightest let-down.'

This insistence on a subject which already was clear to us seemed strange at the time. That evening, I learned why he did so.

Walter Kerr came to my hotel room, and said he, Leland Stowe, and I were invited to dinner with Willkie. We took the Métro to the Palace of Soviets, stumbled through the black-out, and splashed through the puddles of Ostrovsky Pereoulouk to the guest-house.

Willkie, one of the few men I have known who could tower, sitting down, was hunched over a table, his massive body dwarfing the light furniture in the living room. Like Stalin, and so many other strong personalities who are frequently portrayed and caricatured, his leonine head, curly hair waving down to the right eye, and long lip with its mole, made him the very image of all the pictures and cartoons I had seen of him.

With him were Gardner Cowles, Junior, of the Des Moines publishing family, and Joseph Barnes, former Moscow correspondent and foreign editor of the New York *Herald Tribune*, both working for the Office of War Information.

It was a treat to see them, fresh from America, dressed in business suits, talking curtly and directly to the point. We talked over a glass of Armenian cognac and water in the living room, and then over a

## MOSCOW DATELINE

glorious dinner of caviar, cold pigs' feet and tomatoes, fish, roast meat and vegetables, ice cream and coffee, with vodka, red and white wine, champagne and cognac.

The conversation was not labeled off-the-record, but it was a give-and-take affair, and I took no notes at the time, so I do not feel able to quote anyone. I can say, however, that I obtained a clear impression that Willkie was in Moscow to get ammunition for a political battle, in case there should be any isolationist or fifth-columnist movement in America for peace before both Germany and Japan were completely defeated. He wanted the United States to stay in the war until the victorious end. His first statement was designed to convince any waverers at home that Russia was a sturdy ally. Although he did not comment himself on the second front, his statement also was calculated to promote support for a western European offensive, by killing any suspicion that Russia would lie down and leave us alone, once we were engaged with the Germans.

I was surprised when Cowles stood up about 10 P.M., yawned, excused himself, and went off to bed. Walter, Lee, and I said good-bye, and walked up the street to my apartment to exchange notes on the evening. We agreed that Willkie and his party were a very smart collection of men, doing very useful work.

I was surprised again the next day to hear that Willkie had arisen at 6 A.M. of the beautiful, cool, clear morning that broke out of the rain clouds. Normal hours of sleep in Moscow would be something like

## WILLKIE AND STALIN

2 A.M. to 10 A.M. Many Russians and foreigners slept habitually from 5 A.M. to noon. Stalin, Molotov, and other members of the Politburo were to be seen in the morning hours in peacetime, driving out Arbat Street from the Kremlin to their dachas after their customary nights' work. And here was Willkie, with the early-to-bed, early-to-rise way of life. I wondered how long he could have kept it up in the climate of Muscovy if he had stayed. But throughout his seven days in Moscow, he slept nightly only until 6 A.M., if at all; he ate vitamin pills; and daily he charged about in one of the hardest rounds of sight-seeing to which that Slavic capital has ever been subjected.

On his first full day in Moscow, he had eaten breakfast with two more correspondents, Eddy Gilmore and Maurice Hindus, taken a walk around the Kremlin, and talked with the British ambassador, before I started to work. As I walked down Ostrovsky Pereoulok to the Métro, I saw Sir Archibald Clark Kerr's Rolls-Royce parked in front of the guest-house. Willkie rounded out that day by going to the Kremlin with Admiral Standley in the afternoon, talking with Molotov for an hour and twenty minutes on subjects ranging from the United States war effort to the second front; and attending in the evening a performance of Dimitri Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony, the war opus that was started in Leningrad and finished in Kuibyshev. On his second day, he went to the Lenin Library, the Red Army Museum, and a Soviet jazz concert, stopping whenever possible to talk to Russians. It was not the ideal way to find out what was

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going on in the Soviet Union, walking up to some startled citizen, surrounded by interpreters and bodyguards, and asking him what he thought of the situation. But Willkie supplemented these talks by conversations with diplomats, correspondents, and other long-time residents, including the Reverend Leopold Braun, American priest of the French Catholic Church, St. Louis des Français.

Still going strong on his third day, Willkie visited a factory, inspected Moscow's land and air defenses, rushed in late to a movie matinee at Spaso House, another gangster film, stayed to talk to the guests at a buffet supper, and then went directly to the Kremlin at 7 P.M. to see Stalin.

Stalin and Willkie got along famously. For one reason, they were of the same mind on the most important subject of the day — the second front. For another, although they spoke different languages, Russian and English, they talked them in the same way, frankly. Stalin liked Willkie personally, and Willkie admired Stalin.

They were together for two hours and fifteen minutes, a long time for a Kremlin talk. Molotov and an interpreter were present. Willkie handed a written message from President Roosevelt to Stalin, and received a verbal reply. They talked of Soviet and American industrial production, of Russian desire for more active Allied aid, of victory and a peace where each nation would live according to its likes. Willkie went away, sold on the need for a second front.

He went immediately to the 'first front.' Stopping

at the guest-house only long enough for a hasty supper, he drove west that same night, under a pale Russian moon, to the Red army zone near Rzhev. Cowles and Barnes, beginning to wilt by then, General Follett Bradley and Colonel Joseph A. Michela went with him.

This trip was the routine one which the Soviets had long since organized, on the old Intourist model, for correspondents and distinguished visitors. It included an interview with a general, a ride in a jeep, a view of captured German fortifications, a talk with German prisoners, and the sound of gunfire, all at a safe distance behind the actual front, in a stabilized sector. It gave Willkie a chance, however, to talk to some soldiers and peasants. It also gave him a second sleepless night, for after dusk he started the drive back to Moscow.

On his last day in Moscow, he came to a cocktail party, given by the correspondents in the Associated Press room at the Hôtel Métropole, and handed out a statement, summing up his visit.

'I am now convinced we can best help Russia by establishing a real second front in Europe with Great Britain at the earliest possible moment our military leaders will approve,' he said, 'and perhaps some of them need some public prodding. Next summer might be too late.'

That rather ominous statement reflected the Kremlin view. The Soviet government was already looking back through its file of unanswered letters for one eight months old, from the Czech minister and the chief of the Free French mission, presenting the views



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of occupied countries on punishment of Nazi leaders. The Soviets were to reply to that in October with a note pointing out that Rudolph Hess was already in British hands, and suggesting bluntly that he should be tried immediately. Another prod was to be placed in my hands, a letter from Stalin on the importance of a second front and relatively small effect of Allied aid. But before Willkie left, on his last night in Moscow, the most revealing light on the Soviet attitude was cast during his dinner at the Kremlin.

That dinner was the most intimate of any offered to an important visitor. Twenty-eight persons attended. At 8 P.M., they walked through the Supreme Soviet council chamber of the Great Palace, their steps echoing through the vast, empty hall, and entered the St. Alexander room.

Stalin placed Willkie on his right and Admiral Standley on his left, with an interpreter beside each of them. Directly across the table were Molotov, the British ambassador, and General Bradley, also flanked by interpreters. Farther down the table were seated Brigadier-General Philip R. Faymonville, chief of the United States supply mission, Captain Duncan and Colonel Michela, United States naval and military attachés, and the members of Willkie's party. The Russians present were Marshal Voroshilov; Admiral Kuznetzov, navy commissar; Mikoyan, foreign trade commissar; Malenkov, a secretary of the central committee of the Communist Party and alternate member of the Politburo; Shcherbakov, who combined the functions of secretary of the Moscow district com-

## WILLKIE AND STALIN

mittee of the Communist Party, chief of the Sovinformburo, head of the political department of the Red army and vice-commissar of defense; Beria, commissar for internal affairs; Lozovsky, vice-commissar for foreign affairs; and Molochkov, chief of the protocol department of the commissariat for foreign affairs.

The list of guests, titles added, may look long, but seated around the table they were few in the great space of the Kremlin, and it started out as a merry meal. It became merrier in the course of twenty-seven toasts. Stalin proposed a toast to his guest of honor, Willkie. Willkie replied with a toast to Stalin and Churchill. Molotov toasted Roosevelt. That took care of formalities. Then the fun began.

Stalin chided the interpreters for translating in dull, flat voices, without emotion. Willkie promptly toasted the interpreters, 'the only ones who are working here tonight.' Stalin drank to their health and remarked that, when they translated that toast, it was the first time they sounded as though they meant what they were saying.

Barnes proposed a toast to foreign correspondents in Russia, and to Soviet journalists, to which Molotov replied nicely by drinking to Barnes as a correspondent who had been fair and just in Moscow. Cowles brought them to their feet with a roar to drink to the average Russian soldier. Then matters took a serious turn.

Commander Paul Phil, Willkie's naval aide, suggested a toast to air pilots, which was duly drunk. Stalin turned the conversation immediately to Red

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air force pilots who he said were fighting well, although they knew the Tomahawks they were flying were not so good as Airacobras, and the Hurricanes they were flying were not so good as Spitfires. His tone was severe. He carried it even farther, by asserting a hundred and fifty-two Airacobras, which were to be delivered to Russia, had been intercepted en route and diverted to the British.

Willkie tried to liven the tone by remarking that Stalin certainly kept his 'eye on the ball.' That took some explanation, through the interpreters, about golf and baseball, before Stalin got the point. Then he agreed, he did keep his eye on the ball.

But a serious charge had been made, even though presented casually. Clark Kerr, the only British guest, had to reply. He said he had long studied Stalin's character, even before coming to Russia from China, and he had admired him, especially for his bluntness. That quality, he said, called for bluntness in reply. The Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States were united in a common cause, he pointed out, and if any planes were diverted from Russia, it would only be to further the cause of all three. If such a thing had happened, he concluded, he was sure Stalin knew about it in advance and knew it was for the best. That was the final speech.

'Nothing the British ambassador has said will be taken amiss,' Stalin said, and the guests adjourned to the throne room of St. Andrew.

The jocularly was renewed. Marshal Voroshilov produced a Soviet automatic rifle and proceeded to

## WILLKIE AND STALIN

explain its workings, while some of the more timid guests, not accepting his assurance that it was not loaded, ducked every time the muzzle was waved their way. Barnes and Beria got into a complicated but completely friendly argument about the Soviet purges. Newsreels of the defense of Moscow were shown.

Wearily, but happily, the guests wended their ways home in the early morning hours. Just before noon of September 27, Willkie flew off for Kuibyshev and Chungking.

There was a serious aftermath to the Willkie visit. He had come as President Roosevelt's representative, to study the Russian people and Red army, and to promote friendship between the Russian and American peoples. The way in which he carried out that mission provided some upsets for the American embassy.

During the reception at Spaso House, I had seen Admiral Standley, pounding a corner table until it bounced, delivering what seemed to be an old-fashioned lecture to Willkie. That evening, Willkie, who had been introduced to Molotov by Standley, went — without the ambassador — to see Stalin. That could only be interpreted by an ambassador as interference in his affairs and undermining of his position.

Again, Willkie issued his statement about 'public prodding' without advising the embassy of its contents. It was only after the statement had appeared in the American press that the United States diplomats, accredited to the Soviet government, knew about it. The attitude of the Willkie party may have been that theirs was an unofficial visit, that a conver-

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sation with Stalin would be less formal and more productive if the ambassador were not present, and that they were under no obligations to the embassy. The embassy did not see it that way.

A few days after Willkie left, Admiral Standley also took off for Washington with his military and naval attachés. The ambassador returned late in the year with his personal position strengthened, and his attachés promoted to the ranks of brigadier-general and rear-admiral. By then, the period of 'prodding' had passed.

## Letter from Stalin

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**S**TALIN was never known for loquacity. The fact of the matter, a phrase he often used when he did consent to speak, was that he very seldom spoke, and then only for a definite purpose. Likewise, he very seldom wrote. The fact of this matter was that he irritated ambassadors and ministers endlessly by ignoring their notes and letters.

So I was exceedingly surprised to receive a short letter from him. I was not at all surprised, after reading its one hundred and forty-nine Russian words, counting salutation, signature, and date, to have it become an international sensation.

It happened this way:

Stalin had just received Churchill. Stalin had just received Willkie. My New York office conceived the idea that it was time Stalin received Cassidy.

In case this reasoning seems incongruous, let me explain that newspapermen who deal with foreign

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correspondence are divided into two types. The first sits at home with his happy family, in his warm house or office, with plenty to eat, drink, and smoke, and thinks up ideas. The second, who has already had the same idea and discarded it as impractical, sits abroad alone, in a cold hotel room, worrying about where his next food or drink or smoke will come from, and grumbling about the silly schemes of the fellow at home. As may easily be seen, there are great grounds for jealousy between them, the more so since the man at home wishes he were abroad, and the man abroad wishes he were at home. It was New York's idea, which I thought idle, that brought the letter from Stalin.

New York's telegram said:

CASSIDY VIEW WILLKIES STATEMENT TRY  
UTMOST GET STALIN INTERVIEW OR FAILING  
THAT SUBMIT WRITTEN QUESTIONS SECOND  
FRONT ALLIED AID SOVIETS ABILITY RESIST  
ETCETERA ASSOCIATED.

That telegram was sent September 28. It annoyed me. I had made many requests to Stalin for an interview or statement, during my two years in Moscow. I had written a beautiful letter, on the previous June 4, telling Stalin I had just been out to see American tanks and planes going into service on the Russian front, and suggesting that a declaration by him on American aid would be most welcome. I had had no answer. Now, New York had suddenly thought up the same idea. I

## LETTER FROM STALIN

stuffed the telegram into my pocket and forgot about it.

But if there is jealousy, there is also a sense of duty among foreign correspondents. A few days later, while returning from the morning's work at the foreign commissariat to the Hôtel Métropole for lunch, I remembered the telegram. There were ten minutes before the dining room opened at 2 P.M., so I sat down at the typewriter in our hotel room and punched out a letter:

The Associated Press  
Hotel Metropole  
Room 273  
Moscow, U.S.S.R.  
October 2, 1942

J. V. Stalin  
Chairman  
Council of People's Commissars  
Moscow

Sir:

Now that you have talked with Mr. Willkie, and he has given a public statement on the situation and problems of the Soviet Union, the Associated Press of America has directed me, as chief of its Moscow bureau, to ask you for an interview.

We think it would be highly interesting and valuable if you would tell in your own words, for the public which we serve through fourteen hundred newspapers, about this situation.

In case you are too busy for an interview, the Associated Press would appreciate greatly at least written answers to these questions:

What place does the possibility of a second front occupy in Soviet estimates of the current situation?

To what extent is Allied aid to the Soviet Union prov-



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ing effective, and what could be done to amplify and improve this aid?

What remains the Soviet capacity for resistance?

Sincerely yours,

HENRY CASSIDY

Chief of Bureau

hcc:ny

Had I thought the letter would be answered, I should have taken a lot more pains over it. Had I known those questions would become famous, I should have made them much more eloquent. As it was, I went through the motions of carrying out New York's orders, ignoring their 'etcetera,' asking the three questions prescribed and never expecting to hear from them again, any more than I had on all the previous questions when New York or I had tried to draw Stalin out on some subject. The 'ny' at the bottom signified that I had written at New York's orders.

Actually, it was probably my accidental delay in writing that made the timing right, for by the time I did get around to doing the letter, the furor over Willkie's visit and his statement about 'prodding' the military into starting a second front had died down in Moscow, and it was just time for someone else, Stalin himself, to do the prodding. It was probably the plainness and briefness of the questions that prompted Stalin to take this way of doing his prodding.

In the meantime, I had given the original of the letter to George Green, our young afternoon secretary, and asked him to drop it sometime at the mail receiving room in the southwest gate of the Kremlin. I put a carbon copy, with New York's telegram, in the files at

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our apartment, under the heading, 'Miscellaneous correspondence.'

At 11.45 P.M. the next night, I was just engaging in my nightly debate with myself on the proposition, should I go to bed now or read awhile longer, when the telephone rang. It was a girl secretary of the foreign commissariat press department, who said: 'Mr. Palgunov asks you to come to the Narkomindiel immediately. It is very important.' That helped me to make up my mind. I would go to bed.

'I can't possibly come to the Narkomindiel now,' I said with the note of irritation which both sides always affected in conversations between the press department and correspondents. 'It is pitch dark, I am at my apartment in the Arbat at the other end of town, and because Mr. Palgunov has not yet permitted my car to come from Kuibyshev, I have no way of getting there except walking.'

We really talked to the Narkomindiel that way, because the girls' English was so bad that it was a question either of speaking a stilted language or repeating over and over again, until they understood.

'Mr. Palgunov asks you to come to the Narkomindiel immediately,' the girl repeated. 'It is very important,' as though I had not understood.

'If it is important,' I said, 'ask him what it's all about.'

There was a whispered conversation at the other end of the line, and then the girl said, 'I am sorry, I cannot help you. Mr. Palgunov is not here. But he asks you to come immediately. It is very important.'

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'All right,' I said, in pained resignation, 'I'll come. But it will take me forty-five minutes to walk there.'

I pulled on my coat and stumbled down the five flights of darkened stairs, muttering dire threats in what would have been my blue beard if I had a blue beard. Outside, it was as dark as the inside of a black cat. I minced along the sidewalk of Ostrovsky Pereouluk, until I stubbed my toe on one of the low concrete pillars standing there at intervals and for no known reason. Then I switched to the street, climbing over the irregular cobblestones. By the time I had reached the pavement of Kropotkin Street and my eyes had become adjusted to the darkness, it was easier going, and I made good time through Arbat Square, down Comintern Street, and past the Kremlin, the Métropole and the Lubianka to the foreign commissariat.

Once, at the corner of Comintern and Mokhovaya, I was stopped and had to show my night pass for circulation in the streets after curfew hour of midnight. The rest of the time I alternated between fulminating against Palgunov's violation of a man's privacy and wondering why he had called me. I recalled stories of the purge days, when correspondents always notified the embassy before answering any such call, and then went off, expecting to be arrested, or at least expelled. I recollected that Eddy Gilmore, who worked with me, had left that morning by plane for Teheran on vacation, and was spending that night in Kuibyshev, without a permit for residence there. I remembered, of course, my letter to Stalin of the day before, and thought of a few more questions I might ask if I were

## LETTER FROM STALIN

taken to see him. But I decided the reason for the call must be that Palgunov had just heard of Gilmore's arrival in Kuibyshev and wanted to know what he was doing there.

When I reached the press office, the girl secretary dashed out of her cubbyhole to identify me, ducked back into Palgunov's sanctum to announce me, and escorted me into the presence. Palgunov was standing behind his enormous desk, his eyes bulging farther than ever. He emerged to the center of the room, shook hands, waved me into one leather armchair in front of the desk and sat himself in another.

He squinted at me through his thick glasses, and, with an expression that might have been either suspicion, or awe, or both, said:

'The document that you are waiting for is here.'

'What document?' I was tempted to say, but by then I knew. For Palgunov reached over to his desk, picked up a paper, and handed it to me. Across the bottom of it, in violet ink, was the clear, bold, unmistakable signature, J. Stalin. With it he handed me an authorized English translation of the letter. It said:

Dear Mr. Cassidy, —

Owing to pressure of work and consequent inability to grant you an interview, I shall confine myself to a brief written answer to your questions.

1. 'What place does the possibility of a second front occupy in Soviet estimates of the current situation?'

*Answer.* A very important, one might say, a prime place.

2. 'To what extent is Allied aid to the Soviet Union

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proving effective and what could be done to amplify and improve this aid?'

*Answer.* As compared with the aid which the Soviet Union is giving to the Allies by drawing upon itself the main forces of the German Fascist armies, the aid of the Allies to the Soviet Union has so far been little effective. In order to amplify and improve this aid, only one thing is required: the full and prompt fulfillment by the Allies of their obligations.

3. 'What remains the Soviet capacity for resistance?'

*Answer.* I think that the Soviet capacity of resisting the German brigands is in strength not less, if not greater, than the capacity of Fascist Germany or of any other aggressive power to secure for its world domination.

With respect

(Signed) J. STALIN

October 3, 1942.

The original letter in Russian was on paper so plain that it was startling. It was pure white, with no watermark, no heading, nothing to indicate its origin except the signature. It started out bluntly, not 'Dear Mr. Cassidy,' as the translation put it, but 'Gospodin Cassidy'! or 'Mister Cassidy'! The text was typed faultlessly in clear, widely spaced Russian characters. It was an unusual document.

All this I took in, while Palgunov stared at me. I gathered that he did not approve of the procedure. He guarded jealously for himself everything that had to do with the foreign press, but the first he had known of the letter was a summons to the Kremlin to take it and deliver it to me. At the same time he could not disapprove of the procedure, for Stalin's word was law.

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So he simply stared, and probably wondered how it had happened. I did not tell him.

Actually, I had never had much trouble with Palgunov. There were correspondents who hated him passionately and denounced him publicly, privately, to his face, behind his back, and anywhere else they could. I had long since decided it was futile to fight him, because the more he was denounced by foreigners, the stronger his position became among the Soviets, and as long as he controlled the foreign press, it was necessary to cooperate as much as possible with him. I went my way, wrote my stories, and did my job as I thought it should be done. If I thought he was undoing it, I told him so. If I could obtain no change, I let it go at that. So we were generally on fairly good terms. And when he handed me Stalin's letter, I really, for a few moments, loved him.

'This is very nice,' I said; 'this gives me great pleasure,' which was a masterpiece of understatement.

Then came the problem of how to handle the story. I was holding what every Moscow correspondent dreams of, an exclusive statement by Stalin on an important subject. I wanted to make it good. But it was then 1 A.M. Sunday morning, too late to get a good play in the Sunday morning papers, and there were no Sunday afternoon papers in America to handle it.

'If no other arrangements have been made for release,' I told Palgunov, 'I'd like to hold this for Monday morning papers.'

He spread his pudgy hands, shrugged his shoulders, and said: 'It is yours.'

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I thought I caught another glint of suspicion, so I explained that if I sent it immediately, it would be used only briefly in the Sunday papers, whereas the Monday morning papers would give it plenty of space, and the Monday afternoon papers would follow it.

'Then, when will you send it?' Palgunov asked. 'You understand that it is exceptional and I must give the censors instructions.'

For once I was in a position to dictate to Palgunov, I could make my own release date, and I loved it. 'At noon,' I said. 'And please don't let Tass or anyone else who might have a copy send it before then.'

'It is yours,' Palgunov said again, rising. We shook hands once more, a habit we had both acquired in Paris where he was correspondent for Tass while I was in the A.P. bureau, and I walked out with the most dignified pace I could manage. I felt like sprinting.

In the waiting room it occurred to me that it would not be proper to walk down the street waving a naked copy of a letter from Stalin. I asked the secretary for an envelope. She could find none that fitted. In the cold fireplace I noticed a big manila envelope that had been tossed on the charred embers, but was still clean. It was from Tass, the usual envelope in which they sent their dispatches to the press department, and bore the inscription, 'Tob. Palgunovu,' meaning, 'To Comrade Palgunov.' I tucked my letter into that and took it away tenderly.

No good correspondent is ever satisfied with the job

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he does on a big story. I was certainly not satisfied with mine.

I went to the hotel that night, instead of returning to the apartment, and found Walter Kerr was still up in the next room, trying to beat himself in a game of solitaire chess. Larry Lesueur came in from his night broadcast. After administering to them a solemn oath that they would neither say nor do anything about it until noon, I showed them the letter. We sat over it for hours, interpreting it this way and that way, reading back through all Stalin's wartime statements and recalling previous occasions when he had talked or written to correspondents. I slept in my clothes for a few hours, and then got up to do the story.

The way it should be treated, I decided, was to let the letter tell its own story, without any over-interpretation or bragging about its being 'exclusive.' I put the facts in the first sentence, that Stalin considered a second front of first importance, and urged the Allies to fulfill their obligations promptly and on time. In the second sentence I said he had done so in a letter to me. I went on to give the text of the letter, review the history of the second-front issue, and point out that the Russians considered the second front an Allied obligation. That was all.

I walked up to the foreign commissariat, handed in my story, and started to work on the military dispatches. From then on, Stalin's letter and the battle of Stalingrad became hopelessly muddled. As I tried to write the front story, Anurov, a big, curly-headed fellow who looked like an American football player,



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but was actually the senior Soviet censor, kept calling me in for alterations of the Stalin story. First, he said, there had been an overnight change in the authorized translation. Instead of holding 'a prime place,' the second front now was in 'a place of first rate.' Instead of 'the full and prompt fulfillment by the Allies of their obligations,' it was now necessary 'that the Allies fulfill their obligations fully and on time.' The 'prompt' was changed, lest it imply that the Soviets wanted their aid quickened, instead of on schedule. I had to rewrite my story.

Then Anurov wanted the text sent in full, with all the words 'a,' 'and,' and 'the,' and full punctuation, rather than in skeletonized form. He insisted that the word Allies be capitalized in my copy as it was in the original, even though wireless transmission puts all letters in capitals. That bit of delicate attention to the Allies, who were otherwise being roundly criticized, meant more revision of the story.

It finally went off to the telegraph office at 1 P.M., in the care of Venus, our fleet, fifteen-year-old courier, and I was able to finish with the battle of Stalingrad for that day.

Being about as loquacious as Stalin is not, I told the other correspondents about the letter, and showed it off to them, after lunch. I spent the rest of the day in self-recrimination for not having written a more colorful story and for having told anyone else about it. Ironically, the telegraph was interrupted that afternoon, and when communications were restored, my story was sent only after some of the others which

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were written later. I was late with my own 'beat.' But just as the plainly worded letter had drawn a reply, my plainly worded story brought results.

The letter appeared the next morning at the top of page one of *Pravda*, above the Soviet Informburo communiqué, with an enormous heading: 'Replies of Comrade J. V. Stalin to the questions of the correspondent of the American agency Associated Press.' Telegrams started to arrive: from Kent Cooper, general manager of the A.P., who does not often hand out bouquets, 'congratulations grand achievement getting Stalin letter which published world-wide'; from Cy Sulzberger, who had been in Moscow for the *New York Times*, 'congratulations pal'; from my wife, Martha, who can write cablese as well as any correspondent, 'congratulations story re letter which displayed prominently here and London.'

That was only the beginning. The letter appeared Tuesday morning in *Izvestia*, *Red Star*, and all the other papers which are not published on Mondays, while *Pravda* came out with a cartoon, showing six generals of the Colonel Blimp model, in British uniform, being lectured by two younger officers, 'General Decisiveness' and 'General Courage,' while a clock ticked on from eleven-thirty toward the zero hour of twelve.

Admiral Standley held a press conference Tuesday evening and announced he was taking off Thursday for Washington to confer with President Roosevelt. The ambassador issued a carefully worded statement that he was going home to talk over 'ways and means

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of coordinating to the utmost the war efforts of the United States and the Soviet Union.' Talking to us, he made plain he was flying the Atlantic at the age of seventy because 'somebody has dropped a monkey wrench in the machinery somewhere.' That was part of it, although the main reason for his trip was an outgrowth of Willkie's visit.

Wednesday's Soviet papers carried foreign press reaction to the letter. Thursday, they reported Churchill had been questioned on it in the House of Commons, Willkie had expressed hope it would receive widespread attention, and Sumner Welles had commented that military problems should be discussed privately by governments, not publicly by the press and people.

With that I entirely agreed. Of all people to be involved in the second-front controversy, I was among the strangest who could have been selected. As correspondent for the A.P., it was my job to report facts objectively and impartially. That, I did. If a Soviet authority made a pronouncement on the second front, I reported it. But I engaged in no campaign of my own. My idea, which I held firmly but did not put into my stories, was that Russia certainly deserved all the aid we could give her without hurting ourselves, but that our policy should be determined first by what was best for all the United Nations, and next by what was best for us, and that a decision as to the second front should be reached on that basis.

To the Russians, however, I became something of a celebrity, not only as the man to whom Stalin had written a letter, but as the correspondent who had

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dared to raise his voice in favor of the second front. The store for foreigners, which had been limiting sales of wine to a single bottle, heaped four in the arms of my maid. My automobile arrived from Kuibyshev in two days on a flatcar, hitched to the fastest passenger train in the Soviet Union. Russian friends telephoned to congratulate me, although one, a bareback rider at the state circus, couldn't understand why I should ask Stalin about the Soviet power of resistance, when everyone knew how strong it was.

By Friday, the Moscow newspapers were back to quoting foreign press comment on the letter, and on Saturday, the story was dropped.

A few days later, Walter Kerr was typing a letter to Stalin, asking him to make a statement to the *Herald Tribune* Forum. A new English correspondent was stopping me in the hotel corridor, and asking: 'I say, old boy, when one corresponds with Stalin, how does one deliver the letter?' And I was trying to think of a new letter myself.

## Happy Ending

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**A**N OPPORTUNITY to write a happy ending to a story was a rarity in the dark days of 1942. It had been a rarity for me for six years, while covering the war in Republican Spain, the fall of France, and the invasion of Russia. I had a fine chance to write one, however, to the story of Allied relations in the summer and autumn of 1942.

The relations between the Soviet Union and her western associates had encountered difficulties, amounting by then almost to a crisis. The trouble had begun soon after Foreign Commissar Molotov returned to Moscow in June from his trip to London and Washington, bringing an agreement on the 'urgent tasks of creating a second front in Europe in 1942.' The Soviets made clear immediately that they considered that agreement, or at least wanted to consider it, a promise of a second front. The Allies looked on it as an undertaking to consider the possibility of

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a second front. As the days passed, with danger mounting in the east and still no second front in the west, the Russians started to harp at their friends.

The hard feelings, which were made evident during Prime Minister Churchill's visit to Moscow in August, Wendell Willkie's visit in September, and in Stalin's letter to me in October, came to a head in mid-October over the case of Rudolf Hess. It was the action, rather than the words, of the Allies, in occupying French North Africa, and a second letter from Stalin to me, that provided this otherwise sad tale with its happy ending.

The Hess case, which had been simmering for more than a year after Hitler's aide flew to Scotland and was locked up with scarcely a word by the British, boiled over October 14. On that day, Molotov issued a 'statement of the Soviet government regarding the responsibility of the Hitlerite invaders and their accomplices for the infamies committed by them in the occupied countries of Europe.' In it he named Hess, only after Hitler and Goering, as one of the 'ringleaders of the criminal Hitlerite clique,' and said pointedly:

The Soviet government considers it imperative that any one of the ringleaders of Fascist Germany, who during the course of the war has already fallen into the hands of the authorities of states fighting against Hitlerite Germany, should be brought to trial without delay before a special international tribunal and punished with the full severity of the penal law.

This was no idle remark. The Soviet press was accustomed to publish editorials on any such state-

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ments, usually repeating them in the same or slightly different words, without carrying the meaning much farther. But *Pravda*, organ of the central committee of the Communist Party and most powerful of Soviet newspapers, carried an editorial October 19 on this one, making its meaning much more pointed. The newspaper said:

It is necessary to make clear who Hess is now — a criminal who should be called to trial and punished, or an accredited envoy of the Hitlerite government in England, enjoying immunity.

It was only necessary for the notorious criminal Hess to put on the uniform of a Hitlerite aviator and fly to England, and he, it seems, can calculate immediately on the possibility of hiding from trial before an international court, escaping immediate responsibility for his endless crimes, and thus converting England into a haven for gangsters.

On the surface, this was a simple and outspoken demand for immediate trial of Hess. Actually, there was much more to it than that. The Russians did want Hess tried and his status as a guest of the British clarified. But more than anything, they wanted a second front, and the Hess case provided another occasion for prodding the British government. Next to that, the Russians were maneuvering for post-war positions, and here was one in which they felt strong.

The background of the case went back to January 13, 1942, when the Czech minister to Russia, M. Fierlinger, and the representative of the French National Committee, M. Garreau, sent a note to the

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Soviet government on behalf of the occupied nations of Europe, Czechoslovakia, France, Poland, Yugoslavia, Norway, Greece, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg, giving a joint 'declaration regarding punishment for crimes committed during the war,' and asking the Soviet Union to join it with a statement of German responsibility for such crimes. The note was growing yellow with age, and M. Garreau was already back in London, when Molotov pulled it out of its pigeonhole at the foreign commissariat and answered it.

What had happened in the meantime to provoke the answer? In addition to the differences over the second front, which the Russians had come to consider as an open political issue, there had been another exchange of notes. Foreign Secretary Eden sent to Soviet Ambassador Maisky in London an invitation to the Soviet Union to join a United Nations Commission for the investigation of war crimes. The date of that note was important. British authorities said it was sent October 3. The Soviets claimed they received it October 6. Without waiting for a Soviet reply, the British government announced, October 7, in the House of Commons, through the Lord Chancellor, Lord Simon, the details of its plan. It provided for *post-war* surrender and punishment of war criminals and early establishment of the commission to record crimes and name those responsible.

President Roosevelt announced simultaneously in Washington the United States' readiness to cooperate with Great Britain and the other United Nations in establishing the war crimes commission, and its in-



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tention to demand enemy surrender of criminals at the close of the war.

The time-table of these exchanges thus showed:

January 13: Occupied countries' note on punishment of war criminals.

October 3: British note inviting Russia to serve on a war crimes commission.

October 6: Soviet reception of the invitation.

October 7: British and American statements on the commission.

October 14: Soviet reply to the occupied countries' note.

October 19: *Pravda* editorial, demanding immediate trial of Hess.

The Soviet Union was left out of the United Nations' plan until the last moment, and then confronted with a fait accompli. Moreover, its known desire for immediate trial of war criminals was ignored. This point might be argued, on the basis of British and American desire to avoid mass reprisals. But no one could deny Russia, as the country which had suffered the most, the right to a leading place in formation of any plans for punishment of war criminals. That this happened was, on the face of it, a diplomatic blunder. The Soviets did nothing to improve the situation by raising the Hess case so sharply. Allied relations were at their darkest.

In any such international issue, the question, which was rarely raised, but always implied, was: What are you going to do about it? *Pravda* had said it was necessary to know whether Hess were a criminal or an

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ambassador. If the Russians believed, because he was not tried, that the latter was the case, what would they do? The unspoken answer might be that they would abandon the war, leave the United Nations, and make separate peace with Germany. No one who remembered the Russian about-face of August, 1939, the pact of non-aggression and friendship with Germany, could deny that the Soviets were capable of abrupt action. In this case the Soviets had no such intention. But the implied threat was there.

In this case it was the British who took the strong line. There was no doubt that they were riled by the frequent needling from their Russian allies. They made no effort to kiss and make up over this quarrel. The correspondents of London newspapers received impatient telegrams from their editors, turning down stories on the Hess case unless they contained explanations — to quote one of them, 'Why the case of a man who was imprisoned weeks before the Soviet entry into the war is suddenly raised now, and references to the second front ignore the resumed offensive of the western powers' in Egypt.

British officers in Moscow began to snap back at their critics. 'Where was the first front when there was a second front?' they asked, meaning, why was Russia at peace with Germany when Britain and France were fighting in the west. 'Where is the first front, anyway?' they wanted to know, meaning that the Russians were not holding back the Germans.

Britain's firmness was reflected in a speech by Eden, October 30, to the Scotland Conference of Trade

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Unions, in which he declared, 'Our history and our geographical position require that we remain a world power, possessing world-wide interests. We will yet play an important rôle in the world during the war and after it.' This brief extract was published in the Soviet press November 2. Although it did not refer directly to the points at issue, it did indicate Britain's strong attitude. It caused much comment in Moscow.

British Ambassador Clark Kerr called on Stalin November 5 and talked with him for two hours. I was told he brought 'nothing to gladden Stalin's heart.' On November 7, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, when congratulations came to Moscow from the chiefs of all the United Nations, none came from King George. Churchill was supposed to have sent his congratulations, buried in a long telegram on other subjects which could not be made public. In any case no British message was published.

With matters at this impasse, Stalin made his November 6 address to the meeting of the Moscow Soviet, on the eve of the anniversary, in the great council chamber of the Kremlin. For the first time in years, no foreigners, either correspondents or diplomats, were invited. There was anxious speculation as to what he would say. I listened to the speech by radio in Hôtel Métropole, and then ran for the foreign commissariat to write a story. The Soviet position seemed to have softened, the situation looked a little better.

Stalin criticized his allies inferentially, blaming the German gains during the summer on the absence of a second front in the west. Over and over again, he re-

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peated, 'Taking advantage of the absence of a second front in Europe, the Germans and their allies hurled all their available reserves on the front and, massing them in one direction, the southwest, created a great superiority in forces there and achieved a substantial tactical success... The absence of a second front in Europe enabled them to carry out this operation without any risk to themselves... The chief reason for the tactical successes of the Germans on our front this year is the absence of a second front in Europe...

When, however, he came to the essential point — would there, or would there not be a second front — he was more hopeful: 'Yes, there will be, sooner or later there will be one. And it will be not only because we need it, but, and above all, because our allies need it no less than we do.' He proceeded, even, to compliment his allies by his old oratorical trick of raising arguments — this time, against the Allies — and promptly knocking down those arguments. Are there grounds for doubting Allied ability to organize a military campaign? None! Do different ideologies and social systems prevent cooperation? No! Are the United Nations becoming alienated? No!

'There can be only one conclusion,' Stalin ruled, 'namely, that the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition has every chance of vanquishing the Italo-German coalition, and certainly will vanquish it.'

There were other signs of softening of the Soviet heart. The *Pravda's* Hess editorial, which would normally be repeated by the entire press, was dropped by the other newspapers. Articles, especially those by

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Georgi Alexandrov, chief of the propaganda department of the central committee of the Communist Party, and, as such, Kremlin press chief, were noticeably milder in tone. The Russians realized they had made a blunder by pressing the Hess case too hard, in words which one should not apply to an ally. I know of one member of Stalin's Politburo, who asked repeatedly about foreign reaction to the *Pravda* editorial, and swallowed hard when told the truth. When asked whether the real Soviet intent had not been to assure for Russia a leading place in treatment of war criminals, he insisted several times, 'not leading, only equal.'

Then came the news which altered the situation completely. It was conveyed to the Russians by a brief message at the top of the back page of *Pravda*, November 8:

### LANDING OF AMERICAN TROOPS IN FRENCH NORTH AFRICA

London, Nov. 8 (TASS). — As reported by the Reuter agency, American troops under the command of General Eisenhower landed on several points of French North Africa. Ground forces, fleet, and aviation participated in the operation.

According to a statement issued by the White House, American troops landed in order to prevent invasion by Germany and Italy. The Reuter agency reports the American armed forces will immediately receive considerable reinforcements from the English army.

American and English planes dropped over the cities of France appeals of the governments of England and the U.S.A. to the French people.

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The Russian people looked at that, looked at each other, and wondered what to make of it. It seemed to be good news. Any news that meant their allies were fighting was good news. But it was not the second front in Europe. Perhaps it was only a poor substitute for the second front. On the other hand, perhaps it was a preparation for the second front. They did not know.

On the day of the African landings, November 7, my New York office sent me an urgent telegram which arrived the next day, just as I was reading that Tass dispatch, asking for Soviet reaction. I mentioned it to Palgunov more in jest than in seriousness, knowing he never said anything. He simply shrugged his shoulders. I tried the next best thing, interviewing the women translators, men chauffeurs, and girl messengers in the press room of the foreign commissariat. 'Khorosho,' meaning 'good,' or perhaps in this case, 'swell,' was their most eloquent expression of opinion. So I wrote my story, saying the Russian people had heard about the landings, they thought it might be good news, but they didn't yet know.

Some of their questions were answered five days later when the newspapers published the text of Prime Minister Churchill's November 11 speech to the House of Commons, giving the background of the American landings in French Africa, the British offensive in Egypt, and the second-front problem. The same papers which had been prodding him now printed his statement that a second front in the summer or autumn of 1942 was impossible, no matter how great the pres-

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sure of public opinion. They carried his explanation of the now famous communiqué about the tasks of creating a second front in 1942: that it had been considered correct to deceive the enemy thus, even though the people of the United Nations themselves were plunged temporarily in doubt, but that the Soviet government itself was not deceived; it knew, as early as June, that the second front could not be promised.

Later, I learned Stalin himself had known of the Allied plans, down to the very time and place. The troubles immediately preceding the African operations could only mean that, at that time, Stalin was not satisfied. He still wanted a second front in Europe.

The Russians still did not know what to think. Embassies and legations wired their governments that the Russians seemed to be awaiting a directive. A Red army officer told a friend of mine that the troops were hoping Stalin would say something, but were afraid he would not do so until February 23, the anniversary of the creation of the Red army, and the next of the annual occasions on which the leader usually spoke. I was conscious of this feeling. I had made a note, at the time of my first letter to Stalin, to write to him again when a second front was established, asking him the Soviet attitude toward the new situation. As I was walking to work November 12, the day after Churchill's speech was published, it came to me that now was the time to write again: there was no second front, but there was the next best thing to it, the Russians were certainly looking for guidance, and it certainly would be interesting to America to know what

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he thought. That afternoon, after going through the papers at the foreign commissariat, I went back to the hotel and typed this note:

The Associated Press  
Hôtel Métropole  
Room 278  
Moscow, U.S.S.R.  
November 12, 1942

J. V. Stalin  
Chairman  
Council of People's Commissars  
Moscow

Dear Sir:

Your letter of October 3 to me gave the world a valuable exposé of the Soviet attitude toward the questions of the second front, Allied aid, and Soviet power of resistance.

Now that United States forces have landed in French North Africa and the British have defeated the German-Italians in Egypt, the American public would be greatly interested to know, from your own words, the Soviet attitude toward the new situation.

Without wishing to occupy too much of your time, I should like to request a second letter, answering these questions:

What is the Soviet view of the Allied campaign in Africa?

How effective has this campaign been in relieving pressure on the Soviet union, and what further aid does the Soviet Union await?

What possibility is there of Soviet offensive power in the ~~west~~ [sic] east joining the Allies in the west to hasten final victory?

Sincerely yours,

HENRY CASSIDY  
Chief of Bureau

hcc:otn



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Again, it was not a very elegant letter. In fact, it was not even very neat. I forgot to capitalize the 'U' in the word 'union' the first time it appeared in the second question. I Xed out the word 'west' in the third question, changing it to 'east.' But by this time I knew elegance did not count. It was sense that mattered. And this time I really felt I had an answer coming to me.

The initials 'otn,' at the bottom left of the letter, I affixed merely to dress it up a bit. It was a symbol we used to use, on the overnight desk of the New York office of the A.P., to mean an original feature story. It signified, in somewhat unorthodox orthography, 'out of thin air.'

I folded up the letter at 6 P.M., and asked George Green to take it over to the Kremlin, 'to the same place as before.' He looked at the letter and said, 'I get it. And the same three questions.' 'That's right,' I said, 'and maybe we'll get the same answers.' 'A hundred to one says you don't,' said George. I was tempted to take him up on that, but let it go by reminding him he would have made the same bet on the previous letter, and sent him off to the Kremlin.

The next night I was sitting over the supper table in the Métropole at 10.10, alternating my attention between debate and diet. Maurice Hindus and I were arguing, against Edgar Snow, that dialectical materialism, official philosophy of the Communist Party, left no room for mystery, and, therefore, no room for religion. Between points with them, I was arguing with the waiter on the side that I should have an

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extra helping of cheese to go with the cold sausage, bread, and four cups of tea I had already consumed. I was rapidly losing both arguments when Eddy Gilmore came to the door, and waved me frantically into the hall.

'Something awful must have happened,' he said. 'Pal the Goon phoned me to say you should come to the Narkomindiel right away.'

'Awful, nothing!' I shouted, pounding Eddy's big chest in glee; 'it's another letter from Stalin.'

I told Eddy about the note I had written the day before, and then suddenly I was silenced by the thought that I had talked too much about the first letter. This time, if my own mother asked me, I wouldn't tell her until I knew the story was in print. I cautioned Eddy to silence, strolled back into the dining room, and sat down again for a moment, so that the others would not be suspicious. Then, prudently pocketing the lump of sugar left over from my last cup of tea, I yawned, said good night, and left. Once outside the dining room I bolted for my room, tugged on my coat, and ran up the hill to the foreign commissariat.

When I reached the press department at 10.30, Palgunov had not arrived. This I recognized as another symptom of a Stalin letter. Palgunov had obviously gone to the Kremlin to get it, and had not yet returned. I sat down to wait in the dimly lit, orange-papered room, under the pictures of Stalin, Molotov, and Kalinin.

Half an hour passed. The radio in the hall outside

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played the *Internationale* at 11, ending the evening broadcast. The hush of night settled in the Nar-komindiel. Things were not going according to schedule. Perhaps this was not a letter from Stalin. To convince myself there would be one, I began to make notes of background for my story. 'Crisis Allied relations,' I wrote, and then, more cautiously: 'Troubled period. Churchill visit troubles. Willkie visit prod-ding. Stalin letter to me. Hess note and editorial.' I jotted down the adjectives 'difficult, awkward,' to describe this period. For the later period I scribbled: 'Invasion North Africa. Victory Egypt. Churchill speech yesterday. Today's fall Tobruk Bardia featured. No direct comment of appreciation, but evident satisfaction.' Then, apparently to clinch in my own mind what I thought was coming, I wrote: 'Second exclusive, autographed letter. Identical procedure.'

By then it was 11.15 and still no Palgunov. George Green, who had come to help me carry the telegrams down to the post office, went home, having no night pass, and I was alone. I began to wonder whether Palgunov could have sidetracked the letter. I decided against this. The possibility occurred to me of a lesser tragedy, such as Palgunov being run over by a street-car in the black-out. That seemed unlikely. I finally decided he must be going over the English translation.

A secretary was typing in the inner room. I tapped meekly on her door, poked in my head, and asked whether she had any news of Palgunov. 'No,' she said, 'he should have been here long ago.'

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At 11.30, it began to grow chilly. I plugged in the electric radiator, and listened to it clack as it warmed. I detected another sound, like a rat gnawing on the woodwork. This I did not investigate.

At 11.40, the telephone rang in the inside room, and the secretary cooed into it. That, obviously, had nothing to do with me. A second telephone rang. The girl listened to that for a moment, said, 'Cassidy is already here,' hung up, and went back to the first conversation. I felt better. There seemed to have been no change in the program.

At 11.55, Palgunov came bursting into the room. He was red-faced and sweating, his eyes were bulging, but never did he look so handsome to me. He saw me sitting in the corner, tipped his hat, said, 'Bon soir, Monsieur Cassidy, excuse me a minute,' and dashed into his back room.

At midnight, the girl ushered me into his presence. There, on his desk, was the second letter from Stalin.

'Don't tell me you have another document for me!' I exclaimed, in mock surprise.

Palgunov grinned: 'You knew why I sent for you?'

'I suspected,' I said, and sat down before his desk.

'Here is a letter from Comrade Stalin, which I hereby transmit to you,' he said, in his most formal tone, and handed it to me.

I ran quickly over the authorized translation. It said:

Dear Mr. Cassidy, —

I am answering your questions which reached me on November 12th.

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1. 'What is the Soviet view of the Allied campaign in Africa?'

*Answer.* The Soviet view of this campaign is that it represents an outstanding fact of major importance demonstrating the growing might of the armed forces of the Allies and opening the prospective of desintegration of the Italo-German coalition in the nearest future.

The campaign in Africa refutes once more the skeptics who affirm that the Anglo-American leaders are not capable of organizing a serious war campaign. There can be no doubt that nobody but first-rate organizers could carry out such serious war operations as the successful landings in North Africa across the ocean, as the quick occupation of harbors and wide territories from Casablanca to Bougie, and as the smashing of the Italo-German armies in the western desert, being effected so masterly.

2. 'How effective has this campaign been in relieving pressure on the Soviet Union, and what further aid does the Soviet Union await?'

*Answer.* It is yet too soon to say to what an extent this campaign has been effective in relieving immediate pressure on the Soviet Union. But it may be confidently said that the effect will not be a small one and that a certain relief in pressure on the Soviet Union will result already in the nearest future.

But that is not the only thing that matters. What matters first of all is that, since the campaign in Africa means that the initiative has passed into the hands of our Allies, the campaign changes radically the political and war situation in Europe in favor of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition. That campaign undermines the prestige of Hitlerite Germany as the leading force in the system of Axis Powers and demoralizes Hitler's allies in Europe. That campaign releases France from her state of lethargy, mobilizes the Anti-Hitler forces

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of France, and provides a basis for building up an Anti-Hitler French army. That campaign creates conditions for putting Italy out of commission and for isolating Hitlerite Germany. Finally, that campaign creates prerequisites for the establishment of the second front in Europe nearer to Germany's vital centers which will be of decisive importance for organizing victory over Hitlerite tyranny.

3. 'What possibility is there of Soviet offensive power in the east joining the Allies in the west to hasten final victory?'

*Answer.* There need be no doubt that the Red army will fulfill its task with honor, as it has been fulfilling it throughout the war.

With respect

(Signed) J. STALIN

Moscow, November 13th, 1942.

From the state of the translation, it was apparent that that was what had delayed Palgunov. This was a complicated document, both in language and in meaning. I noticed it was on the same plain white paper as the first. But on the first letter, I had learned from a photographer who made a picture of it, Stalin's signature was stamped, not signed. This time, I saw, he had written the words, 'With respect, J. Stalin' himself, in a broad blue crayon, even bolder and more emphatic than his stamped signature.

'Do you have any questions?' Palgunov asked.

For once I thought I would extract some information from him. 'Yes,' I said; 'I'd like to know how these letters are decided on, how they are written, and how you get them.' His hair, which was always stand-

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ing on end, rose a few inches more and he looked aghast. 'Never mind,' I said.

'I must warn you,' said Palgunov, 'that this letter will appear in tomorrow morning's papers.'

'All right,' I said, 'I'll send it right away.'

Out in the press room, I went to work. Kozhemiako, the younger censor, came out to congratulate me, and to go over the translation. He agreed that the adjective 'prospective' should be made into the noun 'prospect,' that the word 'desintegration' should be spelled 'disintegration,' and that the phrase 'being effected so masterly' should become 'being effected with such mastery.'

I wrote two pages of summary and background, typed out the text, and had them stamped. Since it was after the curfew hour of midnight and no cars were available, I had to walk down to the post office myself. At the bottom of Kuznetsky Most, a sentry stopped me for my night pass and started to admire the flashlight which I had extracted from an officer of one of our military missions.

'Excuse me, please, I've got to deliver a letter from Stalin,' I said. He looked at me in amazement, then trotted across the street to tell his comrades. I went on to the telegraph, handed in my dispatches, and climbed back up the hill to write my interpretation. It was 4 A.M., by the time I finished the story.

I felt much happier about this job. It had been my own idea, not New York's. I had kept it to myself, delivering it exclusively. And this time it was good news I had to tell. It did not have the sharp reaction

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the first letter had produced. There were no questions raised in the House of Commons. Just as in the lives of great men, it was a big story when they fell ill and not so big when they recovered, so it was with the story of Allied relations. But it was a great pleasure to report that recovery.

The American embassy telephoned the next morning to present the congratulations of Loy Henderson, then chargé d'affaires, and to ask for the authorized English translation. British Ambassador Clark Kerr hugged me, when I went to his little apartment the next evening for dinner, and called it great work. New York sent a nice message: 'Cassidy superb work warmest congratulations copyrighted Stalin beat which shared with United Press INS here with credit to you Associated.'

High Allied officials told me then they began to notice, on the part of Soviet authorities, a definite desire to understand us. That, they considered extremely important for the future of Allied relations.

I have called this chapter 'Happy Ending.' Perhaps it should have been 'Happy Beginning,' for establishment of a desire for understanding was only a beginning. Next had to come actual understanding.



## Moscow House-Moving

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ANYONE wanting to move house in wartime Moscow just had to pick it up bodily and move it himself. More than that, he had first to cut it loose from its red tape, then carry it away, and finally try to make it run in its new location. I learned a lot about this situation by the process of moving myself during Russia's second winter of war.

It was a significant situation, as an index to the economic status of the Soviet Union. Politically, Russia's position was sound, both at home and abroad: the Communist Party was maintaining firm discipline domestically, while the western powers, the United States and Great Britain, were doing everything possible to aid their eastern ally. Militarily, Russia's position was strong: the Red army still packed an offensive punch, as well as a defense equal to anything the Germans could hand out in any single sector. If the Soviet Union had a weakness, it was economic.

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There were no complete, exact statistics by which this situation could be judged. There were a few general statements and partial figures. Industrial bases had been evacuated successfully to the east, and were keeping the Red army well supplied with arms and munitions. Cultivated areas in non-occupied regions had been increased by more than 5,000,000 acres for the 1942 summer crop, and by 3,700,000 acres for the 1942-43 winter crop. How far these miracles of management had gone to make up for the loss of great industrial regions like the Donetz Basin, for the wheatfields of the Ukraine, North Caucasus, and the Kursk black-earth region, for the tremendous drain made by the front, could only be judged by the economic life of a citizen.

This story would have been best told by a housewife, but there being no American or English woman available to do it, and the Russian women all being too busy, I have taken off my apron, dried my hands, and seated myself before a typewriter to do the job.

My story of Moscow housekeeping went back to May, 1942, when I returned definitely to Moscow from Teheran and Kuibyshev. I dropped my bags at the Hôtel Métropole, took the Métro to the Palace of Soviets, and walked up to my old apartment on Ostrovsky Pereoulouk to examine the situation. It looked bad. The apartment was intact, except for the dent in my bedroom ceiling, made by the incendiary during the first bombing of Moscow; the furniture was all there, and everything was clean and neatly arranged, thanks to the excellent custody of my secretary,

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Sophia Tchijova. But the Volga German maid, Anna, was gone, having been exiled to Siberia with her fellow countrymen early in the war. And all those things I had never noticed about a house until I did not have them — sheets, pillowcases, towels, washcloths, soap, toilet paper, tablecloths, napkins — were missing, having been lost in the shuffle somewhere between Moscow and Kuibyshev. The kitchen shelves, which had once been stacked high with canned food, stood bare, and the hollow seat under the living-room divan, where I used to store my wine and vodka, was an empty cavern.

I turned an electric switch, and there was light. I picked up the telephone, and it gave a buzz. I turned on the gas, and the jets hissed. That was some encouragement, but there was still a lot to be done before the apartment would be habitable. I went back to the hotel and put Tchijova to work on the problem.

During the summer, I alternated in living at the apartment and the hotel. Walter Kerr, Larry Lesueur, Lee Stowe, Eddy Gilmore, and some of the other correspondents, would order their nightly portions of sausage, cheese, bread, butter, and cake at the hotel with me, and we would carry them to the apartment. We did our own cooking, toasting cheese sandwiches, frying the sausage, and liking it. After supper, we sat in the long summer twilight, talking about shop, politics, war, food, and home. When darkness fell about 11 P.M., we walked back to the hotel, if we felt like it, or stretched out on the beds and couches and slept. Mornings, Tchijova's maid, Natasha, came to clean

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up, and to make breakfast coffee if there were any clients.

Once in a while, we threw a party. When John Trant, British consul-general and my oldest and closest friend in that embassy, went home in August, the farewell party was at my place. He made his own guest list: 'Chol,' the famous A. T. Cholerton of the London *Daily Telegraph*; Tommy Thompson, secretary, and Major Park, assistant military attaché of the American embassy; Eddy Gilmore, Lee Stowe, Walter Kerr, and myself. That night we tried a buffet supper. We supplemented the usual sausage and cheese with potatoes, bought in the market. Natasha made a cake. Each guest brought a bottle. John, taking an unexpected stand in the middle of the room and displaying unsuspected oratorical talent, delivered a really beautiful and touching farewell address to Moscow and his friends.

When Admiral Standley came up from Kuibyshev with General Bradley and the embassy staff, the entire corps of American correspondents gave them a party at my place. That time we tried out the cocktail-party routine. The cocktails were seven parts vodka to one part Persian Vermouth from a precious bottle which Walter Kerr brought from Teheran. The sandwiches, as might have been guessed, were sausage and cheese. Janet Weaver, of the *Intercontinent News*, provided a real surprise by bringing a batch of hot biscuits. The party was ruled unanimously a success.

But all this was experimental. Tired of hotel life, after a year of it, I decided I must equip the apartment

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completely, get my own maid, and settle down at home. Tchijova, who, I am sure, could wring water out of a mirage in the Sahara Desert, went to the Gastronome store for foreigners, and came back with the information that they recommended a maid, looking for a job, who would appear the next morning at my hotel room. 'They say she is very old and very ugly,' said Tchijova, telling me the worst at first, 'but very clean and very honest.'

She appeared, Pasha, a little old lady, straight as a sapling, five feet tall, sixty-three years old, with parchment skin wrinkled as much by smiles as by years, and wrapped in a white shawl. She had retired at sixty, she said, but she wanted to go back to work now, to supplement her food ration with daily coffee, her one great passion. She could market, cook, and clean; she would work for three hundred rubles a month plus coffee, providing her own bread from her ration; and she was ready to start. I hired her immediately.

Pasha had a career that was hard to match, at least for variety. She had been housemaid for English and German families, and then for a Muscovite millionaire merchant before the revolution; after the revolution, she had worked for Peters, the CHEKA chief; Yezhov, head of the OGPU, and finally, Kozlovsky, leading tenor of the Bolshoi Opera. So a queer bird like an American correspondent held no terrors for her.

She took firm command of the house. First, she sent me off to the department store, with all the ration tickets I would have until the next series was issued

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(no one knew when that would be), under orders to buy sheets, pillowcases, tablecloths, napkins, and towels. The tickets provided for two sheets and one pillowcase at state prices. At the higher commercial prices I was permitted to buy, without tickets, one tablecloth and six napkins. That, at least, was a start. Pasha found a pair of old sheets among the blankets I had brought back from Kuibyshev, patched up one and converted the other into pillowcases. The towels, she found somewhere else.

She registered me at the Gastronom, opening my food ration. This, for a correspondent, was equal to an ambassador's ration. It provided:

Bread, flour or cookies — one kilo daily (two big loaves of bread).

Butter — three kilos monthly (six pounds).

Meat — five kilos monthly (eleven pounds).

Fish — five kilos monthly (eleven pounds).

Milk — two liters every five days (little more than two quarts).

Eggs — one daily.

Sugar — five kilos monthly (eleven pounds).

Rice or other grain — four kilos monthly (nine pounds).

Fruit, vegetables — unrationed, but limited according to supply.

Daniel, the dog, who had been hibernating in Kuibyshev, came back to Moscow in state aboard a passenger train. His career had been as smooth as Pasha's had been rough. He was brought from Helsinki as a puppy in 1934 by a correspondent, and handed on from one departing newspaperman to another until he reached

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me in 1940. He was like Pasha in many ways, small and neat, his brown coat streaked around the muzzle by distinguished touches of gray. He and Pasha immediately became great friends, trotting around the apartment together, Pasha chattering to him constantly, Daniel replying now and then with a quiet 'woof.'

Finally, Pavel, the chauffeur, returned with the Ford from Kuibyshev aboard a railway flatcar. The household was reassembled. Pasha announced the apartment was ready for occupancy, and I carried my duffel bag home from the hotel — to stay, I thought hopefully.

From then on, Pasha provided the boys with real meals when they came for the evening, although she insisted they bring their own portions of the inevitable sausage and cheese to swell our rations, their own lumps of sugar for the coffee, and their own bottles. There even began to be something of a social life like that of the last winter before the war in Moscow.

Most enjoyable of the evenings were those we spent with British Ambassador Clark Kerr as an impromptu supper club. It started by his inviting Walter Graebner of *Time Magazine*, Jeff Blunden of the Australian Consolidated Press, Walter Kerr, and myself to his apartment one Sunday for dinner. We made a return engagement at my place. Pasha concealed the canned salmon, then current at the Gastronomes, under a delicious mushroom sauce, produced a bottle of Russian green peas from no one knows where, and provided a meal that startled them. The ambassador's secretary,

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John Reed, recently arrived from Washington, came to dinner with him. Edgar Snow and Larry Lesueur dropped in afterward for drinks. The ambassador, no mean man with a typewriter himself, and possessor of enormous experience, vitality, and interest, talked chin to chin with us about our eternal subjects, shop and politics. The supper club became a fixture.

The poker games, which had been a regular feature of pre-war Moscow and Kuibyshev nights, began again. The players usually were Colonel Michela, Captain Duncan, Tommy Thompson, Walter Kerr, Larry Lesueur, and myself. They had lost their spontaneity, however, and when Colonel Michela and Captain Duncan went home in the fall with Admiral Standley for consultation, they disappeared. Meals and arguments were the thing this season, and we ate and talked, night after night, at my apartment, at the hotel, at one of the embassies, or at the Aragvi, the one restaurant open to us in Moscow.

When mid-October passed, the time when the Germans had chased us out of Moscow the year before, and this year all was quiet, I breathed a sigh of relief and looked forward to at least a few months of permanency. I did not realize that another enemy — winter — was approaching, and would soon rout me out of my apartment.

Winter crept up stealthily in 1942. There were none of the flamboyant early snowstorms, boisterous blasts of wind and sudden spells of cold which had heralded its arrival the previous year. This time the first snow fell October 20, during the night, and in the



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morning few knew it had come and gone. The cold descended gradually. Only by the calendar, and by the lengthening nights, could winter's approach be detected.

Pasha, however, was an old soldier in the war against winter. Toward the end of October, she laid out my heavy underwear. She moved my bed from the bedroom, exposed by windows on two sides and a hole in the roof, to the living room. She plugged in the electric heaters, just before I was due home from work, to drive off the chill. Without realizing the change, I found myself typing in the evening on the living-room table, surrounded by electric heaters and wrapped in warm clothing.

Early in November, winter came into the open. The snow flew arrogantly by day, the wind screamed for its right-of-way across squares and streets, the cold snapped savagely at any who ventured into its out-of-doors domain. It was a comparatively mild winter, but even that, in Russia, is cold. The temperature went down to 28 below zero, Centigrade.

The people of Moscow settled down for their annual siege, their ammunition shortened by wartime restrictions. There was little coal, so wood was distributed by streetcar, bus, and truck throughout the city. The gas flickered lower, and some evenings did not light at all. Notices were distributed to every home, limiting use of electricity to a single bulb for each room, taking not more than sixteen watts for a living room of up to fifteen cubic meters, twenty-five watts for up to thirty cubic meters, forty watts for

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more than thirty cubic meters, twenty-five watts for kitchens and sixteen watts for corridors, washrooms, and toilets. Agents called to make sure these regulations were understood, to warn that the penalty for violation was a fine of up to a thousand rubles, and to add that electric cooking plates could not be used for more than four hours daily — and electric heaters not at all!

Finally, came the ominous news that some houses would not be heated, but that their occupants could move to other apartments, left vacant by evacuation, in buildings where central heating would be provided. Anxiously, I sent Tchijova down to the house committee. She came back with the report: my house was in the unheated class. I was moving again!

I could imagine the cries of anguish which would have gone up in America if half the population of a city, say New York, were told they would have to abandon their lifelong homes and go to another place if they wanted to keep warm for the winter. In Moscow, there may have been some grumbling, but I heard none. Some of the people patiently wrapped their belongings in blankets and moved. Others decided to hold out, scraped around for little stoves, ran the pipes out their windows, gathered together some wood, and provided their own heating. It was a question of giving, uncomplainingly, 'everything for the front.' That being the case, I could hardly complain.

I went to Burobin, the office for service to foreigners, and was told there was a small three-room place with

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a wood stove, near my apartment, which could be turned over to me. I expected to walk up another five flights of tenement stairs, enter a dingy hallway, and find a dark apartment with an ugly iron stove squatting in the middle of the living-room floor. Andreiev, overworked but still pleasant building superintendent of Burobin, took me to the proposed place. We drove around the corner from my apartment, three hundred yards down Ulitsa Shchukina, and stopped in front of a charming little house. Andreiev opened the door. Five gently sloping stairs led up to a high-ceilinged hall and a stately, white-tiled Dutch oven. Beyond that was a spacious living room, one end of which was dominated from floor to ceiling by another massive Dutch oven. Beyond that was a low-ceilinged bedroom with two Dutch ovens. Beyond that was a kitchen with a huge wood stove. This apartment took up half of the house, the other half being occupied by several Russian families.

'I'll take it,' I said, 'right now, and for good.'

The process of moving, I thought, would be easy. The house, formerly occupied by a secretary of the Greek legation, had grown a coat of dirt in the year it was vacant, but Burobin would clean it. The electricity and telephone had been turned off, but Burobin could turn them on that very day. A truck was needed to move the furniture, but Burobin could provide a machine for that short haul. Wood was necessary for heating, but Burobin would deliver that in three days. I was ready and eager to move.

In any other country I had ever known, a person

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had only to make known that he wanted to move and he was besieged by agents trying to sell him a house or rent him an apartment, by moving-men wanting to transport his furniture, and by cleaners ready to make the new place fit for occupancy. That was not the way of wartime Moscow.

When the three days expired, November 9, on which date all was to be ready, I went to see Grischin, director of Burobin, and was told that a minor complication had arisen. Before the house could be turned over to me, the Moscow Soviet had to write authorization for the change. It had not yet been written, so nothing had been done, but the house should be ready in another three days. On November 12, the authorization had been written, the key handed to Tchijova — and promptly whisked out of her hand. The chief engineer of Burobin, official hander-out of keys, had witnessed the exchange, and not having been informed of it in advance, claimed the key back for himself. At noon on November 13, having confirmed the transaction, the chief engineer handed the key to Tchijova, and the house was mine.

There were a few other difficulties. The house had not been cleaned. The telephone was not working. There was no truck to move the furniture. The wood had not been delivered. But the house was mine.

Pasha, who had been holding out with Daniel in the old apartment, wrapped in blankets, while I conducted the negotiations with Burobin from the hotel, was determined to move immediately. I recruited Eddy Gilmore, George Green, Tchijova, and Pavel for the

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job, and we drove to the old apartment. There, Pasha had already fixed the order of the moving procession. Daniel trotted ahead as the mascot. I came next, carrying in one hand a bundle of icons tied up by a sheet, in the other a bag of knickknacks, with a white elephant, symbol of good luck, on top. George followed with a box of glassware. Then Eddy with a mattress and two black-out curtains in his arms. Finally, Pavel, Tchijova, and Pasha in the car with odds-and-ends.

Just before we reached the house, my heel caught in a crack in the sidewalk. I wondered if that would mean something to the superstitious Pasha, but decided not to tell her about it. I pulled my foot free, unlocked the door, and we filed in, in the proper order. Pasha went from room to room, crossing herself at each threshold and whispering, 'Krasata, Krasata,' meaning, 'beauty, beauty.'

That first day, a Friday the thirteenth, we put up the black-out curtains in the new house, carried over a few more armfuls of light furniture from the old apartment, and left Pasha installed with Daniel in the storage room by the kitchen, which she had claimed for her own. The coincidence of Friday the thirteenth and moving day brought only good luck. Pasha tackled the house herself, without waiting for the Burobin cleaners, and in two days the white woodwork gleamed, the cream-colored walls glowed, and the hardwood floors shone. Tchijova went on another of her management expeditions, and the telephone worked. Pavel called on the Reuter's garage, and came back with a

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car full of wood. I bethought myself of a truck to move the heavy furniture. It was parked in the embassy courtyard. It belonged to General Faymonville, who had never given a correspondent a scrap of information, but who had been generous with his friendship. He turned out to be generous, too, with the truck.

It backed up to the apartment just after dawn — meaning about 10 A.M. — November 17. With it came a crew — Ramon, the general's driver, Pavel, and George Green, old Mischa, who used to tend our garage, and his son Petia. With myself, that meant six men to do the moving. The five flights of stairs soared to Alpine proportions as we climbed up to do the job. The furniture, which had always seemed modest, suddenly towered like a collection of mammoths. I never realized how huge a refrigerator was, how much a chest of drawers weighed, how awkward a bed could be, until I started carrying them. We started daintily, taking down tables, lamps, and ornaments, until we were so tired we didn't care any more. Then we wrestled those big pieces out the door, down the stairs, and onto the truck. We made two trips that day, taking everything but the refrigerator, which refused to move. That we left behind, its white mechanical head leering defiance. The rest of the things we carried into the new house, and then, still sweating and panting, I had my first party there: vodka, wine, sausage, cheese and bread, spread out on a card table amid rolled-up carpets and unplaced furniture, for Ramon, Pavel, George, Mischa, and Petia.

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Three days later, the truck returned, this time with a mechanic who took the head off the refrigerator, thus ending its resistance. Four of us carried it downstairs and drove it to the house. Its dismembered body gave a final gesture of resistance by refusing to go through the kitchen door. We stood it in the hall between kitchen and the bedroom, clamped its head back on, and left it, licking a black scar on its white side.

Pasha, meanwhile, had dried out and heated the house with Reuter's wood, our own still being nowhere in sight. The next night, I came home from the hotel to sleep for the first time. The doorbell did not ring, so I hammered on the living-room window until Pasha heard me. The lights went out, so I lit a candle in the bedroom. The water in the bathroom did not run, so I washed in the kitchen. Still, it was a pleasure to be home again.

War or no war, I decided to have a housewarming on Thanksgiving Eve. I invested my month's meat ration in sausage. The month's ration of bread went into sandwiches, flour into cake, and sugar into coffee. I extracted a can of baking powder from the embassy, which had received a huge convoyed food shipment from home, and was by far the best-fed establishment in the Soviet Union, and Janet Weaver made another batch of biscuits. Each correspondent brought a bottle of vodka. We mixed it with Teheran lime juice, making very respectable cocktails.

The first of forty guests came at 6 P.M. The last left at 2 A.M. The house was well-warmed. Only two

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things went wrong. The British ambassador discovered I had placed my candles slightly above eye-level, an error which was corrected the next day. Some of the staff of the American embassy were arrested on their way home without night passes after midnight, an embarrassment which ended immediately in their being escorted to their door by an armed guard.

I settled down to everyday existence. My rations, I found, were enough, if I had company no more than once a week. At that, I was much better off than the average citizen. Their rations provided, for the three categories of workers, employees, and dependents:

Bread — 600, 500, and 400 grams daily.

Butter — 800, 400, and 200 grams monthly.

Meat or fish — 2 kilos, 1.20 kilos, and 600 grams monthly.

Sugar — 500, 300, and 200 grams monthly.

Rice or grain — 2, 1.5, and 1 kilo monthly.

(One kilo, or 1000 grams, equals 2.2 pounds.)

Extra tickets provided three boxes of matches monthly, plenty of tea and salt, and soap, when and if there was soap. The bread was divided equally between white and black, chocolate candies were sometimes given instead of sugar, the meat tickets usually brought sausage or herring, butter was often replaced by vegetable oil, and potatoes were given, in the autumn, for grain tickets.

These products were purchased at reasonable state prices, ranging from one ruble for a kilo of black bread to 12 rubles for a kilo of sausage. That meant, at the



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official exchange rate, 20 cents and \$2.40, but at the diplomatic rate, 8 cents and \$1.00. Sugar cost 5 rubles a kilo, butter 28 rubles a kilo, grain 2 to 6 rubles a kilo, milk 2.20 rubles a liter, matches 20 kopeks a box.

On the market, however, where collective farmers were permitted to sell their surplus products without state control, the prices were staggering — meat 500 rubles, bread 100, sugar 1000, potatoes 50 rubles a kilo, milk 70 rubles a liter. Soap was at a premium, 250 rubles a cake; vodka brought 500 rubles a liter, and matches 30 rubles a box.

There, perhaps, was an index to the economic situation. 'It's nothing,' an old Muscovite told me; 'after the last war, bread cost a billion rubles a kilo.' This time the inflation had not gone that far. The economic position was not disastrous, nor even very dangerous. But it certainly was serious.

How had it come about that, in a socialistic society, citizens could pay, at the official exchange rate, \$20 a pound for meat, \$2 a loaf for bread, \$40 a pound for sugar? It was the result of a combination of wartime factors, including rising wages and prices, inflation, and some speculation.

Wages went up for overtime work, untaken vacations and holidays. Women and children, who had never worked before, earned man-sized salaries. The men made more than ever in the army, particularly officers and members of Guards units, who received double pay. Free prices went up as the ability to pay rose and the supply of consumers' goods, always short since the Soviet Union concentrated on capital

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goods and heavy industry, grew even shorter. The state also increased its controlled prices, twice doubling, for example, the cost of vodka. The currency was inflated to cover the state's increased requirements. Some speculation inevitably arose among private individuals, although I never saw any evidence that it was on a large scale or on any official basis. Soviet officials had a completely clean slate in this, as in any other personal matters.

Stalin, who puts in his time only on the most important problems, finally took a hand in the economic situation. The *Pravda* of December 9, 1942, carried at the top of its front page, above the military communiqué, a message to Stalin from the Tambov Province committee of the Communist Party, reporting collective farmers of that region had collected forty million rubles to build a tank column, 'Tambov Collective Farmer.' Stalin replied: 'Convey to the collective farmers of Tambov Province, who collected forty million rubles for a Red army fund to build the tank column "Tambov Collective Farmer," my fraternal greetings and the gratitude of the Red army.'

That started an immense movement of funds to build tanks and planes. Day after day, week after week, well into 1943, newspapers had room for little more than the numerous telegrams exchanged between Stalin and the donors. By simply replying to the messages of his people, Stalin kept the donations coming.

Most of the original contributions came from the farmers, to whom most of the inflated currency had

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gone in exchange for their surplus products. Ferapont Golovaty, a beekeeper of the collective farm 'Stakhanovite,' Saratov Province, who said 'the Soviet government made me a wealthy collective farmer,' gave all his savings, 100,000 rubles. That represented, on the market, 100 kilos of his honey. Joseph Khazalia of Georgia sent 250,000 rubles. Ibragim Karabudagov of Dagestan gave 200,000 rubles and 12,000 pounds of meat. Ivan Borisenko of Kazakhstan gave 25,000 rubles and two cows. Workers, soldiers, scientists, teachers, priests, joined the procession. Lonia Zenchenko, third-grade pupil of school 257, Moscow, addressed Stalin as 'Beloved Grandfather (Dedushka),' and gave 500 rubles. Hundreds of children followed her example. By mid-January, four billion rubles had been collected.

I was in a position to know that this unusual demonstration was as sincere, voluntary, and real as was my own exchange of letters with Stalin. A woman acquaintance of mine, who received sufficient funds from her husband but worked nevertheless, told me she gave two weeks' salary, and was urged by her superior to take some of it back, unless she was sure she did not need it. Stalin himself was receiving the messages, writing the replies, and directing their publication.

It was a healthy movement. The state did not need the money. It could print all it wanted. The army would not get any more tanks and planes. It was already receiving all that man-power and material could provide. But swollen currency came out of circulation, hoarded funds came out of hiding, and

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there was a definite improvement in the economic situation.

Stalin, at this same time, was taking a hand in another matter of supreme import — the battle of Stalingrad.

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and, in spite of the almost hopeless situation, no one doubted that victory would be ours.

And we did achieve victory. The enemy was crushed and flung far back toward the Don.

How well that passage could be taken to describe another battle, to be fought in 1942! Voroshilov overlooked the fact that Tsaritsyn was lost before it finally was won. The official Soviet Little Encyclopedia of 1930 is authority for the uncontestable fact that Denikin took Tsaritsyn June 30, 1919, and was driven out December 25, 1919.

But Stalin had become a soldier and a victor.

Stalingrad, in 1941, was a burgeoning industrial giant of half a million people. It had grown from a frontier post and trading town into a manufacturing city, to which came steel, from which went machines. It sprawled for forty miles along the high west bank of the Volga. Its northern suburbs were the site of the Dzerzhinsky tractor plant, largest in the Soviet Union, the Red October Metal Works, and other great factories, each with its workers' settlement.

Who could have foreseen, on September 3, 1939, when the war began in the west, that one of its great battles would be fought at Stalingrad? Who could have foretold, on June 22, 1941, when the campaign began in the east, that it would come to its turning-point at Stalingrad?

An English map came out to Moscow from London early in 1942, bearing the proud legend: 'Follow the WAR with this map of the WORLD on Mercator's

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projection.' It showed Kalinin, Kaluga, Orel, and other smaller towns which had already figured in the battle of Moscow. Stalingrad was not on the map!

Yet fate or geography, the German or Soviet high command, or a combination of all of them, decreed that here should be fought the great battle of 1942.

The crux of the battle was not possession of Stalingrad, for that was only incidental to the larger issues. Neither was it immediate destruction of the Red army, for that had proved impossible in the German offensive of the previous year all along the front. It was territorial advance north along the Volga to isolate Moscow.

The Germans struck their first main blow early in August across the steppes from the southwest, advancing along the Salsk-Stalingrad railway with a force of eleven divisions, two of them armored, one motorized. Their aim was to break quickly into Stalingrad from Kotelnikovo, about one hundred miles to the southwest. They were stopped just northeast of Kotelnikovo.

The second phase developed with an attack by six divisions, coordinated with the southern group of eleven, striking through the Kalach sector, about forty-five miles west of Stalingrad. They also were stopped. The forces used in these efforts swelled in mid-August from a total of seventeen divisions to twenty-three and then to twenty-five — without avail.

Late in August came the third, and grand, assault from the northwest. The Germans crossed the Don, about forty miles northwest of Stalingrad, on August

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23. They reached the Stalingrad region August 25. That day, they made a terrible air raid on Stalingrad, leveling three-quarters of the city with a cold brutality rivaling that shown in the earlier bombings of Rotterdam, Belgrade, and London. On that same day began the battle for Stalingrad proper.

The Germans, holding great superiority in tanks and aviation, bunched their blows on the main sector northwest of Stalingrad, hoping to take the city by storm. Again they were disappointed. They were able to advance, but their hoped-for rush was slowed down to a walk. They were within fifteen miles of the city limits on September 1. On September 15, they reached the outskirts of the city. On September 22, they were engaged in street-fighting within the city.

By then the Red army had taken its stand, both inside and — more important — around the city. The Germans attacked daily with as many as eight infantry divisions, five hundred tanks and fifteen hundred to two thousand plane flights, but no longer could they break through the Russian lines. The struggle for Stalingrad became a pitched battle, like those of the first World War.

How were the Russians able to halt this formidable foe? Why were the Germans not able to advance farther? There was really no mystery about it. The answer, quite simply, was that the Germans did not have sufficient strength to carry through the attack, and the Russians did have sufficient strength to repulse the attack.

The Germans had made the (for them) fatal mistake

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of dividing their forces. It was the same mistake they had made during the first World War when they diverted a few divisions eastward, instead of concentrating everything on the Schlieffen plan for capture of Paris. This time, they sent a few divisions chasing off into the North Caucasus in an effort to deceive the Soviet command into believing their major objective was the oil of Baku. They concentrated many more divisions in the Orel sector for the later, supposedly decisive, action against Moscow. What was left was not enough to win victory at Stalingrad.

Stalin phrased it neatly in his November 6, 1942, address:

Their attempt to chase two hares at once — oil and the encirclement of Moscow — landed the German Fascist strategists in difficulties. Thus, the tactical successes of the German summer offensive were not consummated, owing to the obvious unfeasibility of their strategical plans.

The Russian strength, that was more than enough to meet this German force, lay in leadership, manpower, and matériel.

General Andrei Yeremenko took command in August of the Stalingrad front, meaning the group of armies defending the entire region. He was one of the finest, toughest, smartest, most direct of that group of high Red army officers whose biographies read so much alike. He was born October 14, 1892, in the Ukrainian village of Markovka. He went to work as a peasant in the fields at the age of ten, was mobilized in 1913, and became a corporal in the Tsar's 168th



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infantry regiment. He was wounded August 19, 1914, at Lwow, but returned to the front in January, 1915, and remained there until the end of the first World War, completing his service for the Tsar in the cavalry.

After the German occupation of the Ukraine in 1918, he became chief of a guerrilla band, joined his forces with those of the Red army and was made an officer in the first cavalry army under Budenny, where he served throughout the civil war. After the war, he became a professional soldier, studying at the Superior School of Cavalry, the Military-Political Academy, and the Frunze Military Academy.

At the start of the second World War, Yeremenko commanded an army on the western front, neighboring the army of General Ivan Konev, who went on to head the Kalinin, and later the entire western front. Early in 1942, Yeremenko led the Toropets operation in the northwest, which resulted in cutting the Rzhev-Velikie Luki railroad and recapture of three thousand cities, towns, and villages, including Toropets. He went to Stalingrad in the summer, under direct orders from Stalin.

Yeremenko's wife and a son, youngest of his four children, were killed by the Germans early in the war. How they died was not made known, but the fact of their deaths was told freely by his colleagues in the high command. He took his revenge at Stalingrad. But not inviolately. He was wounded four times quite seriously, three more times lightly, as his heavy-set, short figure limped through the ruins of Stalingrad

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under mortar and shell fire. Even in the hospital, he retained and executed his command of the front.

Inside Stalingrad itself, he placed the 62d Red army of Lieutenant-General Vassily Chuikov. General Chuikov also was a professional soldier, a divisional commander during the civil war, a graduate of the Frunze Academy, and Soviet military attaché in Chungking before the German invasion of Russia. With Chuikov, as chief of his staff, served Major-General Nikolai Krilov, a big, burly, easy-going, pleasant man who had been chief of staff in the defenses of Odessa and Sebastopol.

They took charge of Stalingrad with a firm hand, throwing out anyone who showed any signs of defeatism or pessimism, as ruthlessly as Stalin had done twenty-four years before them. They brought in reinforcements for the 62d army.

Among them was the 13th Guards divisions of infantry, commanded by Major-General Alexander Rodimtsev. Here was a young Soviet general, purest offspring of the Communist Party, who had first fought in the Spanish civil war, returned to Russia to fight in the Ukraine, retired to the east, and then rode back with his three regiments in trucks to the Volga late in September. They crossed the river in small boats, and took positions in the northern section of Stalingrad.

A legend which immediately made the rounds had it that Rodimtsev's guards burned their own boats. Without doubt the story is apocryphal. No Red army man, at such a time, would waste a good boat. More-

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over, he would not want to draw the fire of the nearby enemy by starting a blaze in the black-out. More likely, the boats were used to good purpose to bring more defenders to Stalingrad. But whether they burned their boats or not, Rodimtsev's men obtained the desired effect — they stayed in Stalingrad.

Rodimtsev's were the first Red army men to be publicized in the enormous, impersonal battle of Stalingrad. It seemed strange to read repeatedly in the Soviet press accounts of the exploits of a single division, under a young major-general, when it was obvious that many more divisions and much wiser men were engaged in that gigantic struggle. Yet, day after day, in all the newspapers of the Soviet Union, were recounted the bravery, the strength, the success of Rodimtsev and his men.

The only reasonable explanation which foreign observers could find was that the Soviet command wanted to make the battle real and personal for the Russian people, but did not want to overpublicize any single leader among the top-flight generals of the Red army. So Rodimtsev, colorful yet innocuous, was chosen. Six other divisions of the 62d army fought, as did his, in Stalingrad. It was only after the battle was won that the public knew that Marshal Timoshenko had long since gone from the southwestern region to the northwestern front; and that Georgy Zhukov, then an army general, but soon to be a marshal himself, was in supreme command of the battle as representative of Stalin's general headquarters.

Much more personal were the stories of men who

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came away from the ghastly graveyard of Stalingrad. One told me that, after seeing the sagging roofs and crumbling walls of Stalingrad, he shuddered at the sight of any high building, even a solid skyscraper of Moscow, for fear it was about to fall on him. Another said his most horrible experience was lying in a Stalingrad ditch, feeling a wave as though of warm blood pass over him, and looking up to see — it was a swarm of rats. Stalingrad crumbled, but not the Red army.

The Germans, having failed to take Stalingrad from the march, settled down in late September to an effort to batter the city into subjection. Their timetable was already ruined, and they were attacking on two- and three-mile-wide sectors, attempting to occupy the northern factory district, where the resistance was strongest, and to split the defense of the city. The Russians had succeeded in checking the enemy at Stalingrad and building powerful defenses around the city, but still, it was a hard fight. Then, on October 9, came a startling reversal in the situation.

The German command announced on that day that it had adopted new tactics at Stalingrad, withdrawing the bulk of its infantry and tanks from the fray, and substituting artillery and dive-bombers for them, to save lives in completion of the task. The only lives it saved were Russian. For the slaughter then diminished and eventually virtually every German there lost either his life or his liberty.

Despite the Germans' announcement, they put on a strong offensive during the last half of October, storming the brick walls and fire-swept yards of the northern

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factory section repeatedly. But they had withdrawn their infantry and tanks, to the extent that the fronts of their action were reduced. They gained an average of fifty yards a day during this period, according to *Red Star*, and they lost an average of one thousand to four thousand men a day. They ceased this action November 5, on the eve of the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, by which time they had hoped Stalingrad would be theirs. They put on a new offensive November 12, narrowing their attacks down to sectors two hundred to four hundred yards wide, instead of two to three miles wide. Then their objective was only to take the shortest way to the Volga, break through the junctions of defending units, and disrupt the Red army lines — a far cry from the original ambitious plan to take Moscow.

They had some successes at individual points where they concentrated their attacks. In four places they broke through the narrow-waisted city to the river. North and south of Stalingrad, they obtained footholds on the Volga's west bank. Field Marshal Friedrich von Paulus, commanding the 6th German army in the attack, set up his headquarters in the basement of the Univermag department store, on Heroes of the Revolution Square in the center of Stalingrad.

The situation, in the autumn, was acute for the actual defenders of Stalingrad. General Chuikov's army headquarters, still within the city, were often more advanced than divisional or regimental headquarters, and often under the automatic gun-fire of the enemy. Five times Chuikov had to move his base, once be-

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cause it was flooded by burning gasoline, at other times because its communications were severed. At one critical moment he ordered his chief of staff to go to the east bank of the Volga, planning himself to remain in Stalingrad. Krilov, shuffling his feet, stood silent. Finally, another member of the staff stepped forward and spoke for him: 'Let's win or die together.' They stayed together.

Rodimtsev's division had cleared most of Mamayev Kurgan, the hill six miles north of the center of Stalingrad, dominating the region. The Germans held only a single ridge, with two huge concrete water towers as their base, as the hill turned brown, then red with autumn leaves, and finally white with snow in the advancing seasons. But farther north, the Guards division of Major-General Stepan Gurev was battling in the outer edge of the factory district, and most of the 62d army's divisions were divided by German salients to the Volga.

The Volga was not frozen in mid-November. Ice-floes broke the Red army pontoon bridge and barge crossings, so that the plight of the defenders inside the city was more desperate than ever.

Then a rumor spread among the troops outside Stalingrad that Stalin was among them. Some said he had been seen walking calmly along the front, inspecting the lines. The same rumor circulated, at the same time, in Moscow. It was never confirmed. I never met a Red army man who had himself seen Stalin on the front, although many said they had second-hand knowledge of such a visit. The story probably sym-

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bolized Stalin's presence in spirit among his men. He, himself, was in his second-story office in the Kremlin with his general staff, drafting plans for his great counter-offensive.

What was true of the fronts around Stalingrad was that, while the 62d army was bearing the brunt of the German attack on the city, a mass of men and materials was being assembled on the enemy flanks. The Germans, having made the mistake of putting insufficient forces into the Stalingrad assault, made another mistake of persisting stubbornly in their original plan. While they were attacking at this single point, and to a lesser extent in the Caucasus, they left the Red armies free elsewhere all along the front.

In fact, except at Stalingrad and in the Caucasus, the Russians held the initiative generally. They had mounted one offensive in August at Rzhev, northwest of Moscow. It carried only into the suburbs of Rzhev, without taking the city. That apparently convinced the Germans that the Red army still lacked an offensive punch. But on a trip to the Rzhev front, just at the close of this offensive, I could see that the Soviet command had not put everything it had into this attack. It had staged simply a light assault, designed to test the German lines and to keep its own forces active, without wasting them.

The real Red army force was gathering around Stalingrad. A general reorganization was under way. The entire Soviet front, which had originally been divided into three groups, each a large unwieldy organization of more than one hundred divisions, under

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Voroshilov, Timoshenko, and Budenny, was made over into twelve compact fighting forces, each commanded by a skillful professional soldier and supplied with hard striking power. At the top of this organization was Stalin, with his own representatives to coordinate the actions of the fronts.

The flow of supplies from the Soviet Union's own war industries, and from its allies abroad, was making itself felt. Heavy KV tanks, limited in number early in the war, were massed in new brigades, totaling possibly three thousand armored machines. While American and British pursuit planes defended Murmansk, Leningrad, and Moscow, the Soviet YAK, MIG, and LAGG fighters gathered around Stalingrad. Roads leading to the Stalingrad front were lined with the offspring of Katiusha, riding into position. American trucks and jeeps rolled back and forth between the front and the rear.

Now, the Germans held most of Stalingrad, but all around them was gathering a storm — a storm that broke November 19, 1942.

On that day, three Red army groups launched the Russian counter-offensive, long and carefully planned, northwest and southwest of Stalingrad. The fronts were the southwest, commanded by General Nikolai Vatutin; the Don, commanded by General Konstantin Rokossovsky; and the Stalingrad, commanded by General Yeremenko. The objective was to break through the enemy flanks and to encircle the Germans at Stalingrad. By November 23, they had succeeded. On that day, units from the northwest and southwest met



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at Kalach and turned east, facing the German 6th army and part of the German 4th tank army, surrounded by a thin strip of Red army forces.

The break-through was made largely at the expense of the Rumanians, already war-weary after their experiences at Odessa and Sebastopol, and more and more discontented as they moved north, farther and farther from home, and even still farther from any prospects of ending their thankless struggles. Ten Rumanian divisions were defeated in this combat, most of them caught and slaughtered by the surprise Red army crossing of the unfrozen Don, northwest of Stalingrad, and the quick advance south, inside the Don bend. Four German divisions also received rough treatment.

The encirclement movement was considered by the Soviet command as the greatest ever executed, exceeding anything the Germans had carried out in the first year of the war. Inside the Red army ring were twenty-two divisions, with other artillery and engineers' regiments and battalions, about 330,000 men in all. There remained the problem of exterminating this force.

There is an old Russian tale about a hunter who bet a friend that he could catch a bear naked-handed. He went out, grappled with the bear, and called back to his friend: 'See, I've got him. The only thing is, now, he won't let me go.' It was still a question whether the German 6th army would let its encirclers go.

There arose another question, a modern version of the old one: Was she pushed, or did she fall? There

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were high-ranking foreign military observers in Moscow who believed the German lines had not been pushed apart, but that the Nazis had intentionally withdrawn their main forces, to shorten their lines for the coming winter, leaving the 6th army as an advance guard and planning to reassemble its forces easily in the spring. As it turned out, that was the interpretation the Germans wanted people to accept of the events — but which the Russians refused to accept.

The Red army sprang a second offensive on the middle Don, farther northwest of Stalingrad, December 16, expanding its occupation of the west bank of the Don, and burying the German forces at Stalingrad under a deeper cover. This time it was the Italians who suffered most, seven of their divisions taking a drubbing, in addition to six German and two Rumanian divisions. Still remained the problem of crushing the enemy at Stalingrad. The decisive stage of the battle was developing southwest of Stalingrad.

Far from leaving their 6th army to be encircled at Stalingrad in accordance with their own plan, the Germans sent a relief expedition to rescue the encircled force. It was headed by Field Marshal von Manstein, conqueror of Sebastopol. It included three tank divisions, three more of infantry and two of cavalry, nine regiments of artillery, and various auxiliary units. Its mission was to advance northwest along the Kotelnikovo-Stalingrad railway, break the Red army ring around Stalingrad, and relieve von Paulus' 6th army.

A German force, endowed with the armor, fire, and

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man-power of von Mannstein's, had never before met its match in the open field. Such forces had been halted at cities, or on natural defense lines, but in the open they had always been able to move where they willed. The turning-point in the battle of Stalingrad was reached when von Mannstein willed to join von Paulus. It was a moment of suspense, for no one could say with certainty how the combat would turn.

Von Mannstein started his march December 12 from positions just north of Kotelnikovo. He was met by the Red army of General Rodion Malinovsky, serving under General Yeremenko. Malinovsky, like Rodimtsev, was an ardent young Communist, who was known to drink many toasts, but never one that did not conclude, 'To Stalin.' He was also a tough, intelligent soldier. And he was equipped with the new striking power of the Red army.

For twelve days von Mannstein pushed forward, using as many as one hundred and fifty tanks in individual assaults, with a similar number in the second line, and a full division of infantry supporting the armor. He passed the Aksai River and advanced twenty-five to thirty-five miles. But on the eve of Christmas, the day von Mannstein planned to celebrate with von Paulus, he had lost three-fourths of his force, and was still only halfway to his goal.

On December 24, Malinovsky struck. In three days he pushed von Mannstein back to the German starting-point. Not content with that, he pursued the broken enemy relentlessly, capturing Kotelnikovo December 29, and putting von Mannstein's forces in

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full flight toward Rostov. From that moment the German 6th army was doomed. From that moment the battle of Stalingrad developed in two separate actions — against the group encircled before Stalingrad, and against the lines sagging far to the south and west.

By then, winter had set in on the steppes. A burning cold wind from the east whipped snow across the barren earth. Frost coated the few stunted trees. The puddles in bomb and shell craters became hard with ice. A seven-foot-square ice cake, floating slowly down the Volga, lodged in the skim between the two banks, the great river was frozen, and on December 16, a Red army man, Sergeant Titov of an engineers' battalion, crossed the river on foot for the first time that winter. Countless men followed him on foot, in trucks and on sleighs. The problem of supplying the Red army west of the river was solved.

The German besiegers of Stalingrad became, in turn, according to their Fuehrer's communiqués, 'the defenders of Stalingrad.' They dug in deep in the basements of the city and the holes of the steppes. They received twenty-five or thirty cartridges daily, with orders to use them only in self-defense. Their daily rations dwindled to four ounces of bread and a portion of horse-meat. This period produced one of the classic remarks of the war, made by a German prisoner who plaintively told his Red army captors:

'We've eaten up our cavalry.'

But it was no joking matter, the reduction of this force which was encircled but refused to yield. The

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Red army gave them one last chance to surrender. On January 8, two officers, accompanied by a bugler and carrying a white flag, approached the German lines. As their bugle sounded a call, the Germans answered them with a hail of fire, and the Red army men scampered for cover. But they returned, waved their flag, sounded their bugle, and this time the German lines were silent. Other Red army men, watching through binoculars, saw their comrades blindfolded and led into the enemy camp.

The emissaries carried an ultimatum. It was a remarkable document, one that was hardly noticed abroad, since it was made public only after it was no longer interesting as news. But in the Soviet Union, it was read and re-read. It said:

To Colonel-General Paulus, commander of the German Sixth army, or his assistant, and to all the officers and men of the German forces surrounded at Stalingrad:

The German Sixth Army, formations of the Fourth tank army and units sent to them as reinforcements have been completely surrounded since November 23, 1942.

The Red army forces have surrounded this grouping of German troops in a solid ring. All hopes that your troops might be saved by a German offensive from the south and southwest have collapsed: the German troops rushed to your assistance have been routed by the Red army and their remnants are now retreating toward Rostov.

Owing to the successful, swift advance of the Red army, the German air transport force, which kept you supplied with starvation rations of food, ammunition, and fuel, is being compelled to shift its bases frequently

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and to fly long distances to reach you. Moreover, the German air transport force is suffering tremendous losses in planes and crews at the hands of the Russian air force. Its help to the surrounded forces is becoming ineffective.

Your surrounded troops are in a grave position. They are suffering from hunger, disease, and cold. The severe Russian winter is only beginning. The hard frosts, cold winds, and blizzards are still to come, and your soldiers are not protected by warm uniforms and live in extremely unhygienic conditions.

You, as the commander, and all the officers of the surrounded troops, must fully realize that you have no possibility of breaking through the ring that surrounds you. Your position is hopeless and further resistance is useless.

In view of the hopeless position in which you are placed, and in order to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, we offer you the following conditions of capitulation:

All the surrounded German forces under the command of yourself and your staff are to cease hostilities.

All the troops, arms, equipment, and war supplies are to be turned over to us by you in organized manner and in good condition.

We guarantee life and safety to all officers and soldiers who cease hostilities, and upon termination of the war, their return to Germany or any country to which the prisoners of war may choose to go.

All troops who surrender will retain their uniforms, insignia and orders, personal belongings, valuables, and, in the case of higher officers, their side arms.

All officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers who surrender will be provided normal food.

All wounded, sick, and those suffering from frostbite will be given medical treatment.

Your reply is expected by 10 A.M., Moscow time, on

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January 9, 1943, in written form, to be delivered by your personal representative who is to travel by passenger car, flying a white flag, along the road from Konny siding to the station of Kotluban. Your representative will be met by authorized Russian commanders in the district of B, one-half kilometer southeast of siding 564, at 10 A.M. on January 9, 1943.

In the event that you reject our proposal for capitulation, we must warn you that the Red army troops and the Red air force will be compelled to take steps to wipe out the surrounded German troops and that you will be responsible for their annihilation.

Colonel-General of Artillery Voronov,  
Representative of general headquarters  
of the Supreme command of the Red army.

Lieutenant-General Rokossovsky,  
Commander of troops of the Don front.

The Red army emissaries returned to their own lines late January 8. There was no need to send a delegation to meet the Germans the next day, for they never came. They had already refused to accept the ultimatum. Their Fuehrer had ordered them to fight to the death, and that they would do. The silence which attended the negotiations prevailed over the front that night, and Soviet loudspeakers called on the Germans again to surrender, but to no avail. The next morning firing was resumed, and two days later, on January 10, the Red army launched a general offensive against the encircled group.

It took sheer strength to crush that cornered foe. The Red army had it. By January 16, the guns of General Voronov, standing wheel to wheel, and the

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troops of General Rokossovsky, charging side by side, had broken off the western half of the German stronghold and squeezed the Germans east into a narrow triangle on the Volga. By January 26, they had broken the enemy force into two small, isolated groups, one west, the other north, of Stalingrad. On January 31, they smashed the western group, and captured von Paulus in his store-basement headquarters. On February 2, they turned out the last pocket of German troops in the tractor plant of northern Stalingrad, and completed their operation.

The conclusion of the battle, greatest certainly of this war, and perhaps of any war, was reported to Stalin by a dispatch from Voronov and Rokossovsky in simple words:

Carrying out your orders, the troops of the Don front at 4 P.M., February 2, finished the rout and annihilation of the encircled enemy troops at Stalingrad.

On the fronts to the north, west, and south, the Red army pressed on with its second winter campaign. Everything that happened there had a direct relation to the battle of Stalingrad itself. All was woven together by one mind in the Kremlin, to make a general winter defeat of the Germans.

To the north, the Red army attacked and captured Velikie Luki, guarding the vital sector between Moscow and Leningrad. That offensive was designed not only to gain valuable ground, but to keep the Germans from diverting important forces to the south and to prevent them from building up reserves for a 1943 spring offensive against Moscow.



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To the south, the Red army pursued the enemy out of the Caucasus. The Germans, after being checked at the approaches to Ordjonikidze, terminus of the Georgian military highway across the Caucasus Mountains to Tiflis, found their rear threatened by the Russian push south from Stalingrad. For once, the Fuehrer's communiqué told the truth when it said the Wehrmacht was retreating to shorten its lines. The Red army followed the Germans into Mozdok January 3, occupied the three cities of Georgievsk, Mineralny Vodi, and Piatigorsk January 11, and reached the Azov Sea February 6, enclosing the remnants of the German forces in the northwest corner of the Caucasus.

Another Red army offensive broke the Hungarian forces on the Voronezh front in mid-January. Six Magyar divisions were destroyed, together with a motley collection of Italians and Germans. The entire southern half of the Red army line was now rolling west, with troops of the Voronezh front, under General Filip Golikov, and of the Briansk front, under General Max Reuter, joining those who had started the surge from Stalingrad.

Second in drama only to the battle of Stalingrad was the act then being played at Leningrad. This city, second in size only to Moscow in the Soviet Union, and second to none in sentimental attachments for the Russian people, had been under siege since September, 1941. Second to none had been the sufferings of its people, who had lived — or died — on four ounces of bread daily during the first winter of the war, and were now undergoing another such winter.

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The stories that came out of Leningrad were horrible: they told of the 'days of the dead,' the first and second of each month, when the corpses of those who had died during the previous month were brought out for burial, having been kept so that their rations could be collected until new cards were issued. They told of every wooden building in the city being torn down for fuel. They told of less than a million people left of the city's original three million.

On January 18 came the dramatic announcement that troops of the Leningrad front, under General Leonid Govorov, and of the Volkhov front, under General Kiril Meretskov, had joined to break the German land blockade of Leningrad. In an offensive which started January 12, they had recaptured the town of Schluesselburg, east of Leningrad, and made their junction across the Neva River.

But Leningrad's sufferings had not ended. The blockade was broken, but the siege was not lifted. I asked for permission to visit Leningrad. Usually, in such cases, I received either permission to go or no answer at all. In this case I received an answer, which was, emphatically, no. The reason, I learned later, was that the Germans had massed 212 artillery batteries around Leningrad, and after the Red army offensive, every one of these guns opened up in a terrible bombardment of the city and its environs. Leningrad had still to be saved.

But in the south, the Red army raced forward on a victorious march that wrested from the Germans everything they had won in 1942, and more. The

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cities that had been the main German bases for their winter defensive of 1941 and their summer offensive of 1942 were Kharkov and Kursk. The Red army took Kursk February 8, and Kharkov February 16. And in the center of the front, Rzhev and Viazma, defensive strong points and offensive threats opposite Moscow, fell to the Russians.

The speed and apparent ease with which these bastions toppled was deceptive. The reasons for their fall were to be found back at Stalingrad. There, the German front-line forces were destroyed or disbursed. The cities behind them were only as strong as the men defending them. When the men were defeated, the cities had to be surrendered and the German line had to be retracted, until a new force could be assembled.

The new Red army organization was quick to take every advantage of its opportunities. Stalin had come into the open as its head. On January 25, in an order of the day congratulating the troops, he signed his name for the first time with the title, 'Supreme Commander-in-Chief,' a power he had been exercising in fact throughout the war, and a few weeks later, he assumed the military rank of marshal of the Soviet Union.

Next to Stalin, as Number 1 soldier in the field, was Zhukov, elevated to the rank of marshal after coordinating the victories at Stalingrad and Leningrad. Three others served as Stalin's coordinators: Voroshilov, one of the original marshals of the Soviet Union, who worked with Zhukov at Leningrad; Alexander Vasilevsky, who assisted Zhukov at Stal-

## THE BATTLE OF STALINGRAD

ingrad and went on alone to represent Stalin at Voronezh; and Nikolai Voronov, another coordinator at Stalingrad, who stayed, after Zhukov's departure, to batter the Germans to destruction.

Under these marshals the generals in command of each front, the officers, non-commissioned officers and men, many of them veterans of the battles of Moscow and Stalingrad, all of them now experienced in modern war, carried out their assignments capably. Their material was excellent, and employed to the best purpose.

For the three months of offensive from November, 1942, to February, 1943, the Red army estimated German losses at 700,000 dead, 300,000 prisoners, 7000 tanks, 4000 aircraft, and 7000 guns. The Soviet calculation of enemy casualties soared to the staggering total, for twenty months, of nine million dead, wounded, and captured — at least four million of them killed.

The Germans suffered a serious defeat, but it was not *the* defeat. As the Red army's lines of communications lengthened and the Germans' shortened, the enemy was able to make a comeback in the Donets Basin, notably recapturing Kharkov. More and terrible battles were ahead.

But nothing could rob the Red army of the glory of the victory of Stalingrad. The strivings, sacrifices, and sorrows of the peoples of the Soviet Union had not been in vain. Russia had risen to her greatest heights.

## A Toast to the Future

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SO THAT is the Russia of the war. What will be the Russia of the peace? Reporting, not prophesying, is my business, but it takes no special gift of foresight to see that Russia, victorious, will be after the war what she was before — Soviet.

To Joseph Stalin, his associates, the Red army, and the Russian people, after a quarter-century of Soviet rule, there is no question, at least consciously, of any other outcome. Stalin said, November 6, 1941, 'There must be no interference whatever in the internal affairs of other nations!' On November 6, 1942, he proclaimed, among the aims of the Allies, 'the right of every nation to manage its affairs in its own way.' To him, there is no doubt but that Russia, left without interference to live its own life, will live it the Soviet way.

If any doubts exist for those outside the Soviet Union, who sometimes imagine questions which hardly

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exist for those inside the frontier, let me quote a passage from a wartime novel by Boris Gorbатов, called 'Alexei Kulikov, Soldier.' The passage depicts the hero, Kulikov, and his friend, Dubiaga, talking in the trenches.

'Russia will always be Russia,' Dubiaga said, twitching about. 'She was under the Tartars, yet she remained Russia. Let her be under the Germans, and . . .'

'I don't want just any kind of Russia,' Kulikov interrupted bitterly. 'If you must know, I want the kind of Russia where I am master of my land just as I was before; and if my wife gives birth to a baby, to have a hospital; and if my son needs education, to have a school. I want a Soviet Russia, do you hear? I don't want any other one, and there will never be any other.'

Prophetically, some time after that conversation, Kulikov and Dubiaga go out on a scouting mission. The latter suddenly waves a white handkerchief over his head and runs toward the enemy lines, to surrender, only to be shot to death by his friend. To the Soviets, let that be the fate of any Russian who unconsciously wants any kind of Russia, who does not consciously and specifically desire a Soviet Russia!

That is not a passage from an ordinary novel, written at the whim of an author. It is a significant statement of policy, written for a public purpose. The novel was serialized in October, 1942, by the *Pravda*, organ of the central committee of the Communist Party and leading newspaper of the Soviet Union. It was meant for education, if any were needed, more than for entertainment.

So, to the Soviets, Russia has been, is, and, victori-

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ous, will be Soviet. What kind of Russia does this mean?

Here the prophet treads on the thinnest of ice. Anyone who recalls Russia's 1939 accord with Germany, and then her resistance to German invasion, realizes that she is capable of the most abrupt about-face, of the most amazing miracle.

Yet, on the basis of her present record, I should say victorious post-war Soviet Russia would be socialistic, but not internationally revolutionary; atheistic, but not violently anti-religious; autocratic, but not anti-democratic.

To the Russians, in this case also, there is no question of any other general definition for their régime. Take the first point, socialism. The 1936 constitution provides, in article 1, 'The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of workers and peasants'; and in article 4, 'The economic foundation of the U.S.S.R. consists in the socialist system of economy and socialist ownership of the implements and means of production, firmly established as a result of the liquidation of the capitalist system of economy, the abolition of private ownership of the implements and means of production, and the abolition of exploitation of man by man.'

At no time, throughout the war, has there been any fundamental change in that constitution or any compromise with private property.

Stalin, outlining the period after the first World War and the Russian civil war, said, February 23, 1942: 'During those two decades of peaceful construc-

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tion, there sprang up in our country socialist industry and collective farming; science and culture flourished and the bonds of friendship between the peoples of our country strengthened.' Certainly, he foresees further development of the same kind of socialist industry and collective farming after the second World War.

The old bugaboo of world revolution, however, had been killed by Stalin himself, long before the war, in his statements that communism was not an export product. If it needed to be buried any deeper, he did that during the war by his repeated statements of the policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other nations — a policy that applied as much to Soviet dealings with other powers as it did to their relations with the Soviet Union. In other words, Russia, once revolutionary, took its hands off other countries.

Still, the Communist Internationale continued to exist. Its chief, Georgy Dimitrov, its bureaus, were moved to the east, along with precious industries and people's commissariats, during the 1941 evacuation of Moscow. Dimitrov later returned to Moscow. Presumably, some part of the machinery connecting the Comintern with the Communist Parties of other countries still worked.

The case for religion seems clear on the record. The Soviet constitution provides, in article 124: 'Freedom to perform religious rites and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens.' But what is more important in this case is:



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Which does the Communist Party promote, religious rites or anti-religious propaganda? The answer is that it favors the latter, that it still holds religion to be the opium of the people, and that Russia, as long as the Communist Party is supreme, will be predominantly atheistic. But those who still wish to practice religion will not be persecuted.

The question of religion, one of the most controversial raised by the Russian Revolution, became an international issue once more, early in the war, when President Roosevelt instructed Averell Harriman, head of his delegation to the Moscow three-power supply conference, to urge freedom of religion on the Soviet government. It became a public issue when the President made known his instructions at a press conference. Harriman's démarches brought no tangible results. The President's statement evoked only a reply by Lozovsky, pointing out the provisions of the Soviet constitution.

There was a noticeable softening in the attitude of the Communist Party toward religion. Publication of the anti-religious newspaper, *Godless*, was suspended, and its editor, Yemelyan Yaroslavsky, a member of the central committee of the Party, turned to writing articles, denouncing German suppression of religion. The most beautiful book published in the Soviet Union during the war was 'The Truth about Religion in Russia,' issued by the Moscow patriarchate. This handsome 457-page volume, bound in blue cloth, encrusted in gold, presented statements by churchmen and photographs to show that, while the

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Germans were desecrating the churches of Russia, freedom of religion existed under the Soviets and the Orthodox Church supported the Russian war effort.

This did not mean a fundamental change in the Soviet attitude toward religion. The only official explanation ever given for suspension of the *Godless* was the shortage of paper. I heard that a people's commissar — in other words, a member of the cabinet — sent his secretary out to purchase a copy of the book on religion, and was told it was intended only for circulation abroad. The real means of discouragement of religion, such as atheistic teaching in the schools and special taxes, public utilities rates and other financial charges on religious institutions, remained in effect.

To the most impartial observer, it could only seem that a wartime truce prevailed between the Orthodox Church, naturally patriotic, and the Communist Party, obviously anxious to unite all that was Russian against the Germans. All that could be foreseen, after the war, was a continuance of the Communist Party's atheistic policy, but less active discouragement of religion.

Yet, here again, there were strange signs. Among the greetings, published in the Soviet press for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, November 7, 1942, was one from Sergei, acting patriarch and metropolitan of Moscow, to Stalin:

In the name of our clergy and all true believers of the Russian Orthodox Church, true children of our Fatherland, I cordially and blessingly pay tribute to You, the person chosen by God to lead our military

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and cultural forces, guiding us to victory over the barbarian invaders, to the peaceful flowering of our country and to a bright future for its peoples. God bless with success and glory Your great deed for the sake of the Fatherland.

The word 'God' was capitalized for the first time, in the Soviet press, since the revolution. Similar messages came from Nikolai, metropolitan of Kiev, and Kalistrat, patriarch of Georgia, both written in ecclesiastical style, both wishing Stalin long life and early victory. These telegrams were notable, not only for the fact that they were sent, but also for the fact that they were published in the official press. Further state recognition was given to the Orthodox Church by the appointment of Metropolitan Nikolai on the government commission to investigate German atrocities in occupied territory. What these signs might portend for the future, no one could say.

The case for autocracy is less clear, being obscured by a vocabulary of words that do not always mean the same thing to all men. By autocracy, I mean independent, absolute rule by a man responsible only to himself; and by democracy, government by the people exercising supreme power through representation.

Stalin, in his November 6, 1942, summary of Allied aims, mentioned 'restoration of democratic liberties.' His constitution was modeled after democracy in its purest form. It provides, in article 30, 'The Supreme organ of state power of the U.S.S.R. is the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R.,' which should exercise exclusive legislative power and oversee the actions of

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the executive body, the council of people's commissars. The deputies to the Supreme Soviet, by article 134, 'are elected by the electors on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot.' That is democracy.

There is a catch in the constitution, however, in article 126, granting citizens the right of forming public organizations, 'and for the most active and politically conscious citizens from the ranks of the working class and other strata of the toilers, of uniting in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks], which is the vanguard of the toilers in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and which represents the leading nucleus of all organizations of the toilers, both public and state.' In other words, above all the democratic system is placed a comparatively small body of men (about 3,000,000 out of the total pre-war population of 193,000,000), whose power is unlimited. Their leader is Stalin. That is autocracy.

Stalin derives his power from his post as secretary-general of the Communist Party. His assumption of the chairmanship of the council of people's commissars, just before the start of the war, and of the commissariat of defense, soon after the German invasion, had the practical effects of simplifying prosecution of the war and of identifying it with Stalin's name, in the minds of his people, but in no way affected his position as supreme ruler.

Stalin, who turned sixty-three years of age on December 21, 1942, may well relinquish the chairmanship

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of the council of people's commissars and the commissariat of defense after the war. But he will probably retain the secretary-generalship of the Communist Party as long as he lives, and the men of his native Georgia live to ripe old ages. As secretary-general, he will remain the autocrat of Russia, but one who is not, in principle, opposed to democracy.

To say that post-war Russia will be socialistic, atheistic, and autocratic does not mean that she will be static. Out of so tremendous a struggle, some change must come. No nation underwent a greater upheaval than Russia after the first World War. But then she was a defeated, dissatisfied power, her structure shattered. After this war she should be victorious and satisfied, her structure stronger than ever. In anticipation of that, one great change may already be foreseen — a more benevolent régime.

This régime has started to grow mellow with age after twenty-five years of existence. It has been well satisfied with its servants on the front and in the rear during two years of war. It is showing its benevolence in many ways, some small, almost intangible, but all significant. The days of purges, for example, have ended.

Marshals Voroshilov and Budenny could have their northwestern and southwestern fronts ripped to shreds during the first year of the war, yet retire to the rear, Voroshilov temporarily, Budenny permanently, in dignity and honor. Marshal Timoshenko could pass from one front to another, in victory or defeat, with head equally high to men. Marshal Shaposhnikov

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could serve serenely, through retreat or advance, as chief of the general staff, and retire only because of illness, to be followed by Vasilevsky. Of the five original marshals of the Soviet Union, only one was not heard of during the war, Marshal Kulik, but for years he had been in obscurity. One of the most remarkable cases was that of Lev Mekhlis, once chief of the political department of the Red army, who could slide downhill, yet be named lieutenant-general when the political commissars were converted into military commanders.

The newfound benevolence could be seen in everyday evidence, which may seem trivial, but which is equally symptomatic. On Arbat Street, running west out of Moscow, a path often taken by cars from the Kremlin, it was strictly forbidden for civilian drivers to pass any moving vehicle, lest the center of the road be blocked. Enforcement of this rule was gradually relaxed, until drivers were finally passing freely the slow buses in their way. In Sverdlov Square, in front of the Bolshoi Theater, I saw a militiaman accost a little ragamuffin, one of the 'wolf-children' with faces of old men, who roam Russia in times of distress, like scavengers. The militiaman handled the boy with a gentleness that could not be surpassed by a policeman of any country, patting his pockets for possible weapons, and then tugging him by one arm to a place of safe-keeping. That was an isolated case of a kind that many noticed.

To what lengths this benevolence would lead, no one could say.

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With this kind of post-war Russia, will it be possible to cooperate? The answer is that it may be difficult, but it can — and must — be done, if the Allies are to win the peace as well as the war.

Stalin said, November 6, 1942, 'It would be ridiculous to deny the existence of different ideologies and social systems in the various countries that constitute the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition. But does this preclude the possibility, and the expediency, of joint action on the part of the members of this coalition against the common enemy who threatens to enslave them? Certainly not.'

It should be equally possible, and expedient, for them to cooperate after the war. In the field of immediate post-war problems, no insurmountable differences are to be foreseen. Russia, in fact, as the nation which has suffered most and fought best, has been surprisingly mild in its advance demands, much milder than some of the governments-in-exile of smaller states, which fought for a few days, then fled abroad to demand the dismemberment of Germany.

Russia's desire is to destroy the Hitler régime. But this does not apply to the entire German nation. 'We do not pursue the aim of destroying Germany, for it is impossible to destroy Germany, just as it is impossible to destroy Russia. But we can and must destroy the Hitler state,' Stalin said, November 6, 1942. Russia does not even desire complete demilitarization of Germany. 'We do not pursue the aim of destroying the entire organized military force in Germany,' Stalin said, 'for every literate person will understand

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that this is not only impossible as regards Germany, just as it is in regard to Russia, but also inadvisable from the point of view of the victor. But we can and must destroy Hitler's army.' No one of the United Nations could object to these aims, or put forth a more modest plan for post-war treatment of a defeated Germany.

Russia does desire severe punishment of the Nazi leaders it holds responsible for outrages in occupied territory. The Soviet government, in notes November 25, 1941, January 6, 1942, and April 27, 1942, to all countries with which it then maintained diplomatic relations, formally charged the Nazi government and German command with systematic, organized looting of property, razing of towns, seizure of land, enslavement of workers, forcible abduction of laborers, destruction of Russian national culture, and decimation of the Soviet population. The April 27 note concluded: 'The Hitler government and its accomplices will not escape stern retribution and deserved punishment for all their unparalleled crimes against the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and against all freedom-loving peoples.' With this, the other United Nations are agreed.

No territorial problem has been posed by the Soviet Union. Stalin said, November 6, 1941:

We have not, and cannot have, any such war aims as the seizure of foreign territories and the subjugation of foreign peoples — whether it be peoples and territories of Europe or peoples and territories of Asia, including Iran. Our first aim is to liberate our terri-



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tories and our peoples from the German-Fascist yoke.

We have not, and cannot have, any such war aims as that of imposing our will and our régime upon the Slavonic or other enslaved nations of Europe, who are expecting our help. Our aim is to help these nations in the struggle of liberation they are waging against Hitler's tyranny and then to leave it to them quite freely to organize their life on their lands as they think fit.

Among Russian territories, Stalin certainly includes eastern Poland, Karelia, Bessarabia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, which were incorporated in the Soviet Union before the German invasion. The local Soviet governments of these regions have been carefully moved into the Soviet interior, away from enemy occupation, and kept in existence for the day when the Red army returns to their capitals. The problem of the Polish borders and the independent existence of the Baltic States may become an issue after the war, but it should not trouble the fundamental relations of America, Britain, and Russia.

Summarizing on November 6, 1942, what he considers 'the program of action of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition,' Stalin listed: 'abolition of racial exclusiveness; equality of nations and integrity of their territories; liberation of the enslaved nations and the restoration of their sovereign rights; the right of every nation to manage its affairs in its own way; economic aid to nations that have suffered and assistance in establishing their material welfare; restoration of democratic liberties; destruction of the Hitler régime.'

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None of those principles should cause any trouble around the conference table.

Above the immediate questions of making a peace rises the great problem of maintaining, after the war, friendly day-to-day relations and close practical co-operation between the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. In this respect, since the three powers became associates in war, the record has not been good. It has been marred by the Allied under-estimation of the Soviet Union, Soviet distrust of the Allies, the controversy over the second front and the hard feelings over the Hess case.

There have also been differences arising from the Soviet Union's impatience to brush away the German hands clutching for its throat, while the Allies have been slower, more calculating in their action. Stalin was ordering his Red army to defeat the invader in 1942, while Roosevelt was estimating war production for 1943 and Churchill was speaking of years of battle to come. The Russians were urging immediate revolution in occupied countries while their governments-in-exile were counseling patience and cautious preparation for the proper moment to rise. When the envoy of one small occupied nation told Kalinin that Moscow radio broadcasts urging violence might interfere with these preparations, the venerable Soviet president, growing blind but still active, declared emphatically that revolution was a living thing which must be permitted and even encouraged to grow in its own way. This was a temporary difference, born of the problems of the moment.

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The more fundamental difficulties could be attributed generally to lack of understanding on the part of the Allies, and lack of confidence on the part of the Soviet Union. Neither fault need be irreparable.

Soviet distrust of the United States and Great Britain is as old as the Soviet régime. It dates back to the Allied intervention against the Bolsheviki at the start of their rule. Although the United States policy was not to interfere in domestic Russian politics, but only to protect Allied supplies and rescue the Czech troops presumably making their way across Siberia, the fact that American troops landed in Siberia makes them interventionists as much as any others in Soviet eyes. Some of that distrust still lingers, troubling the war effort, for the Soviets suspect reactionary British and American political elements to this day of working against them.

Allied misunderstanding of the Soviet Union is equally as old as the régime. It has many causes, not the least being the language difficulty. Given the importance of Russia, it is startling to realize how few American public servants know her tongue. During 1942, only one officer of the United States embassy could speak Russian fluently enough to carry on a political conversation, and that none too well — and he was transferred to Washington during the course of the year. For an ambassador, even of the ability of Admiral Standley, it is an obvious essential to have aides capable of communicating for him with the authorities to whom he is accredited. The misunderstanding can also be traced to lack of information

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made available by the Russians, which in turn goes back to their lack of confidence. Most of all, perhaps, the misunderstanding is due to geographical and political isolation and to lack of studious interest in Russia. What is needed is a corps of men, like those traditionally developed by the Germans, interested in Russia, experienced in her language and customs, anxious to study her without spying into whatever she considers secret, and capable of interpreting her to the United States.

On both sides there must be a desire for confidence and understanding. On the Soviet side, such a desire seems to have grown since the Allied victories in North Africa late in 1942 finally convinced the Russians that their friends fully intended to fight the war. Although vague complaints began to be evident again early in 1943, in press and public, that there was still no second front in Europe, they were no longer in their carping tone. Stalin had told his people a second front was on the way, and they were ready to believe. On the Allied side, an increasing number of missions gave evidence of a desire for understanding. It seemed necessary only for Russians to put their confidence into practice, and for the Allies to achieve their understanding, to make the cooperation effective.

In actual practice, such cooperation is certainly possible. Brigadier-General Patrick J. Hurley, former secretary of war, came to the Soviet Union in November, 1942, on the most difficult of missions, one aspect of which was to see the front, the other of which was to discuss matters of state with Stalin. The Red army

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front and Stalin's office had been two of the most inaccessible spots of the war. General Hurley went to both, and left two months later, having fulfilled both missions to his complete satisfaction.

In my own relations, covering a small field but one which may be typical of many in post-war business relations, I found cooperation from top to bottom. At the top, no correspondent could ask quicker, better service than one-day replies from a prime minister to two letters which had been timed properly. At the bottom, the two censors, Anurov and Kozhemiako, were sometimes slow for reasons of their own, but never thoughtless and always open to reason. In the middle, Palgunov sometimes conveyed to me decisions for which he would give no reason, but always convinced me that those decisions were made in good faith and for reasons which he considered fair.

Palgunov even gave me the surprise, at the close of 1942, of inviting me to lunch at the Hotel National with some of his colleagues. There was Boris Mikhailov, former Paris correspondent of *Pravda*, editor of the *Journal de Moscou*, and present chief of the American section of the Soviet Information Bureau. There was Vadim Krushkov, secretary-general of the Sovinformburo. And there, to my surprise, was one of my six companions on the train trip I took from Sochi to Moscow at the start of the war. He turned out to be none other than the celebrated Ivan Lebedev, Soviet chargé d'affaires in Yugoslavia during the German invasion of that country, whom the Germans now accused of being the chief of the Serbian guerrillas.

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He was working at nothing more warlike than two desks in the Sovinformburo and Narkomindiel.

We joked about our crowded train compartment and about what the Germans would have thought if they could have seen Lebedev there, while he was supposed to be campaigning in the mountains of Yugoslavia; we talked about the war and about our business of telling the story of it to the world; we ate roast beef and drank red wine. I enjoyed that lunch as much as any I have ever had with anyone, anywhere. And I thought, with such men, friendship is definitely possible.

Just about that time there was another little meeting of Russians and Americans. The officers of the United States supply mission put up a Christmas tree in their quarters, the former home of the German military attaché on Khlebny Pereoulouk, and invited in twenty-two of the neighborhood children. One of them was eight-year-old Valodia, whose father was away at the front. Valodia, being Russian, accepted a glass of wine, but to drink it he had first to propose a toast.

Climbing up on a chair, he stood, raised his glass and said:

'To Soviet-American friendship.'

His own people, and the American people owe it to Valodia, and to his father, to perpetuate that toast.

THE END



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